



THUCYDIDES & HERODOTUS

Edited by Edith Foster & Donald Lateiner

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Edited by
EDITH FOSTER and DONALD LATEINER

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For
Louise Gouëffic
§
For
Bonnie Lateiner
and
Estella Paloma Lateiner

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Abbreviations

The list below does not include standard abbreviations for classical authors and their works. Please see *OCD*³ for these.

AA	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
AJAH	<i>American Journal of Ancient History</i>
AJPhil.	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
AK	<i>Antike Kunst</i>
AM	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung</i>
Anc. Soc.	<i>Ancient Society</i>
ASNP	<i>Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Classe di Lettere e Filosofia</i>
ATL	<i>Athenian Tribute Lists</i>
BCH	<i>Bulletin de Correspondance Hellenique</i>
BICS	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, London</i>
BMCr	<i>Bryn Mawr Classical Review</i> (online)
CAH	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i>
CJ	<i>Classical Journal</i>
Cl. Ant.	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
C Phil.	<i>Classical Philology</i>
CQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
CR	<i>Classical Review</i>
CSCA	<i>California Studies in Classical Antiquity</i>
CW	<i>Classical World</i> (Classical Association of the Atlantic States)
EA	<i>Epigraphica Anatolica</i>
EMC = CV	<i>Echos du Monde Classique: Classical Views</i> (Classical Association of Canada)
FGrHist	F. Jacoby, <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> , ed. F. Jacoby (1923–56)
G&R	<i>Greece and Rome</i> , NS

GHI	<i>Greek Historical Inscriptions</i> , ed. Todd
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
Harv. Stud.	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
ICS	<i>Illinois Classical Studies</i>
IG	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i>
JRGZM	<i>Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums</i> , Mainz
JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
LEC	<i>Les Études classiques</i>
LSJ	Liddell and Scott, <i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> , 9th edn. with rev. suppl.
MH	<i>Museum Helveticum</i>
ML	R. Meiggs and D. Lewis, <i>A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century BC</i> (rev. edn., 1988)
NC	<i>Numismatic Chronicle</i>
PCPS	<i>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>
Philol.	<i>Philologus</i>
PLLS	<i>Papers of the Leeds International Latin Seminar</i>
PP	<i>La parola del passato</i>
QS	<i>Quaderni di Storia</i>
RE	A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll, <i>Real- Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (1893–)
REA	<i>Revue des études anciennes</i>
REG	<i>Revue des études grecques</i>
RhM	<i>Rheinisches Museum</i>
SCI	<i>Scripta Classica Israelica</i>
SEG	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i> (1923–)
SO	<i>Symbolae Osloenses: Norwegian Journal of Greek and Latin Studies</i>
TAPA	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
YCLS	<i>Yale Classical Studies</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

Notes on Contributors

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Introduction

Edith Foster and Donald Lateiner

When earlier classicists and ancient historians read Thucydides, they were mindful of the Herodotean templates. For instance, the continental exponents of scientific philology in the nineteenth century took for granted that the two historians could not be interpreted separately. Thus, Ernst Friedrich Poppo (following the example of his predecessor, K. W. Krueger), begins his commentary on Thucydides (written between 1875 and 1886) with a remark on Herodotus.¹ Moreover, his treatment of the introductory chapters of Thucydides offers many further references to Herodotus, both as a paradigm for Thucydidean prose, and also because the text of Herodotus offers relevant remarks on the historical events.² To these observations one might object that the beginning of Thucydides' *History* treats ancient history, and that therefore the relation between Thucydides and his predecessor is exceptionally evident in these passages; however, if we examine Poppo's remarks on Thucydides' plague narrative, a passage often considered to represent Thucydides

¹ *Θουκυδίδης Ἀθηναῖος ξυνέγραψε*. Simplicitatem veterum qua solent nomina sua in principiis scriptorum commemorare exemplis illustrant interpretes, ex quibus unum Herodoteum *Ἡροδότου Ἀλικαρνησσοῦ ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις* ἥδε προferimus . . . (Scholars elucidate the direct style of the ancient writers, in accordance with which they were accustomed to memorialize their own names, by comparison to the most important examples, from which I bring forward only Herodotus . . .).

² Further notes to Herodotus in Poppo's commentary on the first ten chapters of Thucydides' *Archaeology*: as a prose example, ad loc. 1.1.2, 1.2.4, 1.7, 1.9.2, and 1.9.4; for historical background, ad loc. 1.2.6, 1.3.3, 1.4, 1.6.3, 1.8.1. For further Herodotean passages in the *Archaeology*, cf. Hornblower (1996), 138–9; On the close relation of the historians' prose style, cf. Dover (1997).

at his most 'scientific', approximately the same density of cross-references to Herodotus is revealed.³

An assumption that there was a close connection between the two authors informed these commentaries despite the fact that they were formulated during a period in which some readers held the elder historian suspect as the 'Father of Fables', and crowned the younger with the laurels of 'scientific history', so that the two became heroic opponents, the figures of an antithesis in which Thucydides' impersonal and analytical text shone incandescent light upon Herodotus' rambling incapacity. Disqualification of Herodotus was *de rigueur*, especially among scholars studying Thucydides, and, if anything, the contrast gained in unjustified sharpness during the early twentieth century. For example, Abbott (1925), 10: 'Herodotus has been called the "Father of History"; in truth he is only the father of story-telling: the first and most lively of our special correspondents . . . 21: his celebrated *Logoi* . . . further vitiated by careless inaccuracy, love of exaggeration, addiction to entertaining anecdote, and indiscriminate acceptance of ancient lore—all of which properly belongs to a rudimentary age,' or Cochrane (1929), 46: 'When Thucydides wrote, there lay before him the researches of Herodotus, a panorama, so to speak, of all varieties of political experience . . . full of keen and penetrating observation, but so interlarded with the picturesque and the metaphysical that, while they provided the material for intelligible classification, they did not approach the point of classification itself.'

This repetitive zero-sum style of critiquing the two first historians was a reflection of an ancient view we are about to discuss, and has now been largely abandoned.⁴ Scholars now hypothesize a more

³ Poppo refers to the Hippocratic corpus and the Lucretian translation, but cites Herodotus as a control for important and otherwise perhaps easily miscontextualized concepts. See, for instance, his remarks ad loc. 2.51.1: 'τὴν ἰδέαν non speciem, sed modum atque habitum significat, ut 4.55.2. Herod. 1.203, 2.71(τὴν ἰδέαν refers not to the appearance, but the manner and form [i.e. of the disease], as at 4.55.2, cf. Hdt. 1.203 and 2.71)', ad loc. 2.51.2, on Thucydides' famous quotation of Solonian wisdom (Hdt. 1.32.8: σώμα ἔν οὐδέν αὐταρκές . . .), or ad loc. 2.51.6, 'δὲ . . . οὐκ ἐπιλάμβανεν . . . cf. Herod. 7.115 ἐπιλαβὼν λοιμὸς τὸν στρατὸν ἔφθειρε; ad loc. 2.52.2: οὐδενὶ κόσμῳ . . . Hac formula utuntur Herodotus, Procopius, alii rerum scriptores. Cf. 3.108.3, 7.23.3, 7.40.3, Herod. 3.113. . . '.

⁴ For further explication of 'the overriding view that Thucydides despised Herodotus, and treated his work almost as a travesty of history' (Rogkotiś 2006, 58), and the recent about-face on this issue, cf. Rogkotiś (2006). In addition, a useful and brief critique of the scholarship on Thucydides that most insisted on aligning him with modern historical positivism is provided in Stahl (2003), 13–15. As

positive relationship between Herodotus and Thucydides, just as they also recognize the important ancestry of Homer for both (see Chapter 2 below).

If this reassessment has taken a long time to emerge (as we now think), two problems must be kept in mind. First, ancient judgments on Herodotus made it easier throughout subsequent history to slight Herodotus' achievement. Thucydides, as Philip Stadter and Catherine Rubincam point out in Chapters 3 and 5, was Herodotus' first and most important successor in large-scale historiography; moreover, the similarity of their subjects and themes provoked him to stake out his own contrasting territory.⁵ What good luck for Thucydides to have a predecessor he could emulate, and from whom he could take his bearings! What bad luck for Herodotus to have the historian whom subsequent history accepted as the paradigm of the genre for one's first epigone and critical reader!

Moreover, subsequent ancient critics frequently and explicitly expressed negative opinions about Herodotus—a feature absent from Thucydides' anonymous polemics. Well-known examples are found in Aristotle (*μυθολόγος*, *gen. anim.* 756b6), Plutarch (*de Herodoti malignitate*),⁶ Josephus (*πολλὰ τὸν Ἡρόδοτον ἐλέγχει τῶν Αἰγυπτιακῶν ὑπ' ἀγνοίας ἐψευσμένον*, *Ap.* 1.14), Lucian (*ὁ μὲν τὰ ἀληθῆ συγγεγραφώς*, *Ver. Hist.* 2.31), and Aulus Gellius (*Herodotus homo fabulator*, *Noct. Att.* 3.10.11). To these critical (and decontextualized) remarks should be opposed the positive assessments of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (cf. e.g. *Dem.* 41, *de Thuc.* 5 and 23), who also praises his countryman's subject, structure, and arrangement as superior to those of Thucydides in *ad Pomp.* 3 and 6.⁷ In addition,

demonstrated by Poppo's treatment (cf. notes 1 and 2), the tendency to oppose the two historians, while common, was never universal. Cf. Macan (in high old age, cf. 419) in *CAH V* (1935), who gently demurred from this prejudice: 'The due appreciation of Herodotus and Thucydides as artists may have suffered sometimes from two contrary misconceptions; the one, regarding Herodotus as a mere child of Nature, creating indeed a great work, but almost in sport, unconscious of design and innocent of forethought: the other, regarding Thucydides as a sheer incarnation of science, or at least of the scientific spirit, and repudiating on his behalf the charge of literary artfulness, as derogatory to his conscience and his achievements' (*CAH V* 410). Cf. Strasburger (1955); but forceful condemnation of Herodotus continued, cf. e.g. Meiggs (1972), 287–8.

⁵ Cf. Lateiner (1989), ch.10, and Parke (1946), 80–92.

⁶ However, cf. Pelling (2007) for a review of Plutarch's 'spectrum of different attitudes' (162) to Herodotus, some of which are very positive.

⁷ Cf. Momigliano (1966), 27: 'Dionysius is in fact the only ancient writer who never said anything unpleasant about Herodotus.'

Cicero, for whom Herodotus was the *pater historiae*, must be included among Herodotus' supporters, although he also has less flattering things to say.⁸ Positive or negative, Cicero's remarks witness to Herodotus' fame; indeed, Lucian went so far as to posit that Thucydides responded as much to Herodotus' high reputation as to Herodotus' historical method (*Hist. consc.* 42).⁹

The contrast governing the reception granted the two historians is usually clear: both were famous, but Thucydides earned a reputation for trustworthiness (although his difficult style has always annoyed readers; cf. e.g. Dion. Hal. *de Thuc.* 30–2), and could therefore be named as a model by subsequent historians (e.g. Polybius, 8.11.3 and 12.25a, or Nepos, *Life of Themistocles* 1.1 and *passim*), and, as was customary among the ancients, even more often imitated than named (Sallust, Julius Caesar, Tacitus). Herodotus, as we have just seen, was critiqued on grounds of substance, although praised for his style (e.g. Dion. Hal. *de Thuc.* 23; Lucian, *Hdt.* 1). Ancient imitation of Herodotus, who became the preferred model for Hellenistic historiography (Hornblower 1995, especially 65), was therefore not as overt, despite the fact that it was probably as pervasive as imitation of Thucydides.¹⁰ Overall, this meant that modern perception of Herodotus' importance lagged behind, while his reputation as a wonderful teller of tales undermined his respectability.

The relatively equal fame, but unequal reputation, of the two historians in modern times is visible from the period following the appearance of the Aldine text of Herodotus in 1502.¹¹ Henri Estienne's (=Henricus Stephanus) *Apologia pro Herodoto* of 1566, perhaps meeting the preconceptions resulting from ancient criticism, and perhaps also the criticisms of more recent times,¹² defends Herodotus as a pious author who did not knowingly lie to his

⁸ Cf. Samotta (Ch. 13) and Stahl (Ch. 6) in this volume; Momigliano (1966), 127.

⁹ In a formulation that responds to the previous paragraph (*Hist. consc.* 41), where Lucian has declared that historians should be fearless, incorruptible, and independent, he argues as follows: 'Ὁ δ' οὖν Θουκυδίδης εἰδὲ μάλα τοῦτ' ἐνομοθέτησεν καὶ διέκρινεν ἀρετὴν καὶ κακίαν συγγραφικὴν, ὧρων μάλιστα θαυματούμενον τὸν Ἡρόδοτον ἄχρι τοῦ καὶ Μούσας κληθῆναι αὐτοῦ τὰ βιβλία. He saw both historians as desiring fame, cf. also the opening story of his *Herodotus*.

¹⁰ Cf. Pelling (Ch. 11), Baragwanath (Ch. 12), and Samotta (Ch. 13) in this volume.

¹¹ Cf. Kramer (1980).

¹² Cf. Momigliano (1966), 139.

readers,¹³ and devotes lengthy passages of his essay to showing that Herodotus' stories, however fantastic they seemed, were plausible history. He thus openly admits that Herodotus, in his view, needs defending from those who felt that his account did not live up to Thucydidean standards. At the same time, he treats him as equally famous with Thucydides, arguing, for instance, that the fifth-century historians are important for two reasons:

First, it is likely that the most distinguished men, famous for their courage in war, drank prudence from reading them, and sought [from them] advice on what to do or not to do, as if from a reliable oracle (happy those who are instructed by the dangers of others) . . . Second, because nearly all writers of history who came after them derived their various methods of writing history, among other things, from one or the other (and especially from Thucydides), and their writings were as if ideal forms that appeared to those who were writing . . .¹⁴

Thus, while Estienne understands that Thucydides' fame was greater, particularly among those looking to learn how to write history, he announces both historians as important paradigms for statesmen and subsequent historians.¹⁵ His words did not receive the reception one might have hoped for. Enlightenment preference for Thucydides is well documented, and needs no rehearsal here.

¹³ It should perhaps be explained that Stephanus quite literally tries to show that Herodotus was the pious kind of man 16th-century Christians could publicly approve of, bringing forward Herodotean statements he construes as respect for divine will, and arguing, or asserting, their beauty as statements of piety.

¹⁴ Una est, quod ex illorum lectione praestantissimos quosque et bellica virtute clarissimos viros prudentiam hausisse, et de variis rebus gerendis vel non gerendis consilium, tanquam ex oraculo certissimo petiisse (felices, quos facerent aliena pericula cautos) . . . verisimile est. Altera, quod horum utroque (ac praesertim ex Thucydide) omnes propemodum qui sequuti sunt historicos, cum alia tum varias scribendae historiae regulas derivasse, et horum scripta tanquam ideas illis scribentibus obversatas fuisse. . . . (note the Platonic word 'idea'). We note the similarity between Hobbes' recommendations to his dedicatee, in the preface to his translation of Thucydides (1629), and the purposes for which Stephanus recommended the historians to his readers in the previous century (on Hobbes, cf. Schlatter 1945, 356; Scott 2009). Both moderns recall the opening of Polybius' *Histories* (1.1).

¹⁵ On Stephanus and the reawakening appreciation for Herodotus in 16th-cent. Europe, cf. Momigliano (1966), 137–41. Perhaps of note from this period is Montaigne's essay, of approximately 1580: 'That We Should Not Judge of Our Happiness Until After Our Death'. Using Ovid's translation of this dictum (*Met.* 3.135–7) as an introduction, the essay (cited here in the sonorous Florio translation of 1603) begins as follows: 'The very children are acquainted with the storie of Croesus to this purpose: who being taken by Cyrus, and by him condemned to die, upon the point of his execution, cried out aloud: "Oh Solon, Solon!" . . . '.

The age of great statesmen looked to Thucydides, and the age of rationalism claimed him, as was mentioned above, as one of their own.¹⁶

Scholars have nevertheless recently been able to look past Thucydides' general criticism of his predecessors (cf. especially 1.97.2 and 1.21, elucidated in Hornblower 1996, 19–20), and also past Thucydides' corrections of Herodotus (the most famous of which are in 1.20), and to credit Herodotus' pervasive influence on Thucydides' speeches and narrative of events.¹⁷ This volume aims to draw connections between Herodotus and Thucydides and therefore to make us better readers of both historians.¹⁸ The endeavour requires re-examination of Homer's influence on historical narratives. The poet had provided a monumental description of war and its psychological consequences, known in every detail to Herodotus, Thucydides, and their ancient readers. As a result, the historians' writing is permeated with Homeric narrative structures and language; in this volume Richard Rutherford, Hans-Peter Stahl, and Edith Foster (Chapters 2, 6 and 8) argue that this is as true for Thucydides as for Herodotus. An additional important commonality with Homer is the historians' use of direct and indirect speeches, which Carlo Scardino and Christopher Pelling (Chapters 4 and 11) examine for their rhetorical qualities.

The importance of warfare and politics for both Herodotus and Thucydides is reflected in all papers, but especially those of Donald Lateiner, Edith Foster, Wolfgang Blösel, Rosaria Munson, and Emily Baragwanath (Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12). These chapters engage with war and its effects from a variety of perspectives; some of these authors, most conspicuously Wolfgang Blösel and Emily Baragwanath, discuss the pressures warfare exerts on the historians

¹⁶ For a bibliography, cf. Rusten (2009), 498–500.

¹⁷ As Philip Stadter argues (Ch. 3), the fact observed two decades ago by Simon Hornblower, namely that 'virtually no factual historical detail in a Thucydidean speech is not already known to us from Herodotus' (1992, 142), has encouraged readers to consider whether Thucydides shared not only Herodotus' factual understanding of events, but also important aspects of his understanding of history. As support for this welcome contention, Hornblower (1996), 137–45 provides a useful list of passages in Thucydides that respond to Herodotus, together with scholarship on these passages.

¹⁸ For some important previous studies of the connection between Herodotus and Thucydides, cf. e.g. Cornford (1907), Macan (1935), Strasburger (1955), Momigliano (1966), Schadewaldt (1982), Pelling (1991), Hornblower (1994), Rood (1998), Rengakos (2006), Rogkottis (2006), Scardino (2007).

themselves, as they attempt to draw up characters and accounts that are both true to events, and acceptable, or relevant, to the readers among whom they found themselves. Rosaria Munson reminds readers that both historians faced the persistent contest with the Persian Empire, a fact that gave Thucydides many opportunities to square off against, align himself with, or evade, his predecessor.

Other contributors show that Herodotus and Thucydides observed similar wartime psychologies. Donald Lateiner's analysis (Chapter 7) of the failure of oaths and treaties in both historians notes important divergences in the historians' treatment of oaths, but his analysis of the similar reasons for the failure of these agreements complements Hans-Peter Stahl's exposition (Chapter 6) of the role of 'blind decision making' in the historians. Both scholars demonstrate that for Herodotus and Thucydides rational agreements and plans take second place to the passions, habits, and behaviours that drive events.

Similarities between the historians are also emphasized by Edith Foster (Chapter 8) on the parallels between Herodotus' Thermopylae narrative and Thucydides' Pylos narrative, and in Carlo Scardino's detailed exploration (Chapter 4) of indirect discourse in the historians, which straddles the divide between linguistic and literary analysis to explore commonalities in the historians' prose. By contrast, Catherine Rubincam's argument (Chapter 5) describes a famous divergence between the historians, and suggests some reasons for the character of the historians' different numeric practices.

Catherine Rubincam's chapter also contains an important warning against importing modern expectations when assessing the numeric practices of ancient historians. The final chapters in this volume directly glance at the historians' ancient readers, who are an important control for our analysis of the relation between the historians. Christopher Pelling (Chapter 11) interrogates the expectations cast by fourth-century rhetorical handbooks: can these handbooks contribute to fruitful analysis of the speeches in Herodotus and Thucydides? Emily Baragwanath (Chapter 12) explores Xenophon's debt to both historians, by the light of which Xenophon's own historiographical initiatives appear more clearly. Finally, Iris Samotta (Chapter 13) charts the fates of Herodotus and Thucydides in the Roman Republic from the third to the first centuries, providing a survey of their dual presence at the dawn of Roman historiography.

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Part I

Methods of Reasoning

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Structure and Meaning in Epic and Historiography*

Richard B. Rutherford

The epic poems of Homer have traditionally been studied in literature courses, the historical works of Herodotus and Thucydides in courses on ancient history. That separation has sometimes obscured the important affinities between the epic and early prose historiography, affinities which are evident at every level, from small points of phraseology through the extensive use of speeches to the whole world-view.¹ Of course, literary historians and critics have not ignored the two great historians, and there has been important work produced in the last twenty or thirty years which sheds much light on their narrative strategies. To survey that work in detail would be a paper on its own. I shall say a little about some areas important for my argument, before turning to questions of structure and meaning. My aim is to explore one aspect of historiography's debt to epic, and to use this as a basis for some comparisons and contrasts between Herodotus and Thucydides.

* I am grateful to the editors for their invitation to contribute to this volume, and to Simon Hornblower, Chris Pelling, and Philip Stadter for comments on a much earlier paper which underlies the present essay. It is to that earlier paper that Hornblower (1996), 15 alludes ('as Richard Rutherford shows in a forthcoming paper'), in the course of a discussion of changing approaches to the Thucydidean text (in particular the abandonment of the 'genetic' approach). Since ghost-allusions of this kind to unpublished papers are frustrating for the reader, I am delighted to have the opportunity to present some of that earlier material in a new context.

¹ For previous discussions, and many aspects not discussed here, see Jacoby (1913), 502–4; Huber (1965); Strasburger (1972); Griffin (1990); Rengakos (2006); Marincola (2007); Pelling (2008).

Ancient criticism was in no doubt that Homer was the prime model for historiography. Herodotus was 'the most Homeric of writers', declared 'Longinus' (13.2). The newly found poem from Halicarnassus calls him 'the prose Homer of history' (*SEG* 48.1330.43). So too the ancient life of Thucydides comments that the historian was an emulator of Homer 'in the disposition of his work' (Marcellinus 35), and later returns to this point: 'most of all, as I said, he was an emulator of Homer, in the selection of his words and in his precision in composition, as also in the force, the beauty and the rapidity of his exposition' (37). But when we turn to the historians' own references to epic, it does not seem quite so simple. They normally mention Homer to find fault with him in some way. Herodotus takes issue with those who refer to a River Ocean surrounding the world: in his view Homer knew of no such river but merely invented it (2.23; cf. 4.8, 36). He criticizes Homer's account of Helen of Troy (2.112–20, seemingly drawing on but rationalizing the version by Stesichorus). Thucydides distances himself from Homer, and stresses the need to handle poetic evidence with care: '... if we can trust Homer's poems in this respect, and it is likely that, being a poet, he would exaggerate' (1.10). The context is noteworthy: he is arguing that the Trojan War, Homer's subject, was less significant than his own. It is reasonable, he says, to think that the Trojan expedition was greater than any before it, but it still fell short of today's standards. Admiration and respect for Homer are combined with a desire to correct his misconceptions, to outdo him in choice of monumental subject.² Rather different, but equally suggestive, is the passage in Pericles' Funeral Speech in which the statesman proclaims that the power of Athens will make her the wonder of generations present and to come: 'we need no Homer to sing our praises, nor any other poetic encomiast' (2.41.4). Homer remains the supreme poet, but Athens has transcended the need for poetic commemoration. So at least Pericles supposes. In the end, with the empire gone, Athens finds its commemorator in Thucydides himself. Pericles cannot be

² He takes a similar stance with respect to the Persian War, admitting that it was 'the most extensive action in previous history ... yet even that was brought to a swift conclusion by two battles at sea and two on land. This war [i.e. the Peloponnesian War] far exceeded the Persian War in length, and over its course the suffering that resulted for Greece was unparalleled in such a timescale' (1.23). Compare Hdt. 7.20–1.

conscious of this irony, but in the years after 404, the historian and his audience will be.

Greek historiography sprang from multiple roots, though much is obscure to us because so many works are lost. To concentrate on Homeric epic inevitably simplifies a complex picture. Herodotus drew also on the geographical and ethnographic writings of Hecataeus and others, and on poetic texts of all kinds; on oral narratives, family history, and local traditions.³ With Thucydides we must also take into account the development of formal prose, especially oratory, medical and scientific texts, and the writings of the sophists.⁴ What nevertheless needs emphasis is that none of these other sources provided an adequate model for an extended narrative of political and military events, a narrative that did not merely catalogue or enumerate, but dwelt on the significance of these events and stressed the motives and emotions of the participants, the sufferings of the victims,⁵ and the larger implications for the community or society described. Historiography needed epic to show it the way.

But we cannot let that generalization go without qualification. Herodotus and Thucydides do not stand in the same relation to Homer, for the obvious and crucial reason that Thucydides looks back to Homer but also to Herodotus. Although Thucydides never mentions his predecessor, it is generally agreed that he is strongly influenced by him, though that influence takes the form of reaction and rethinking of what history should be about.⁶ If we feel that Homer is more tangibly present in Herodotus' text than in Thucydides', that may indicate Thucydides' need to define himself against his predecessor as well as to distance himself from the poetic exaggerations

³ See Marincola (2006) and Fowler (2006).

⁴ The Hippocratic and sophistic writers also have importance for Herodotus, as has been increasingly recognized. See the important work of Thomas (2000) (summarized Thomas 2006).—Some readers may expect reference to the influence of tragedy on historiography. That would extend the scope of this chapter too widely, but in any case I have reservations about the debt of early historians, including Herodotus, to tragedy, and ascribe greater importance to the epic influence on both genres: see Rutherford (2007) (contrast e.g. Said 2002, Chiasson 2003 on Herodotus; the case for Thucydides is easier to make, see Hornblower 1987, 111–20).

⁵ For the importance of suffering as a criterion for significance in both epic and history see esp. Strasburger (1972). Thuc. 1.23.1–3 is a *locus classicus* (cf. *Il.* 1.2–3, *Od.* 1.4).

⁶ For discussion, bibliography, and a detailed catalogue of correspondences see Hornblower (1996), 122–45.

of epic. Yet in spite of the many differences, we can see at once how impossible it was for Thucydides to strike an altogether new path. Just as epic made free use of speeches, so did historiography. Herodotus has innumerable speeches, great and small; Thucydides is more restrained, limiting them on the whole to major figures and restricting them to public occasions; he does more to create a standard pattern (especially in his use of antithetical speeches). But all these artists use them as tools of analysis, to shed light not only on character but on the significance of events and the importance of speech itself as a persuasive tool.⁷

Above I stressed the debt of historiography to epic in tackling an *extended* narrative. The scale of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* themselves seems to have been unusual among the early epics (the so-called Cyclic poems were evidently much shorter). If, as many believe, the *Odyssey* is a kind of sequel or complement to the *Iliad*, its size will be part of this emulation. Herodotus too may have drawn together much material from less substantial works by others. Like Homer, he enlarged and transcended his tradition. But this is not just a matter of length for its own sake. Neither epic nor history is simply 'one damn thing after another'.⁸ Massive texts such as Homer's poems and the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides need to be structured in a way that not only presents a vivid and comprehensible narrative, but also reveals the significance of the events—how cause and effect are related, how the end of a story is prefigured or implicit in its beginning.

That last point may cause some misgiving when we are dealing with a historian. Of course epic poets may shape their narratives as they please: they are dealing with a world of fiction, even if the Greeks may have believed in the Trojan War as a historical event.⁹ How far, though, can historians be allowed the same freedom? True, they must inevitably select and interpret, but does that interpretation sometimes distort? The historian must use his imagination, but when does that imaginative activity turn him into a novelist? The

⁷ Hohti (1976) and Pelling (2006b) discuss Herodotus' speeches. Those of Thucydides have been much more extensively analysed, e.g. Stadter (1973), Macleod (1983), Pelling (2000), 112–22 (= Rusten 2009, 176–87), and the biblio. in Rusten (2009), 492–3. On the relation between the two writers' practice see Deffner (1933).

⁸ The formulation of Edna St Vincent Millay (1892–1950).

⁹ On the debate on the concepts of fiction and myth in antiquity see e.g. Veyne (1983), and the essays in Gill and Wiseman (1993).

question arises, for example, in many passages of Herodotus where he cannot have access to authentic testimony (Darius' pillow talk with his wife comes to mind, 3.134). It arises still more acutely with Thucydides' account of the Sicilian Expedition. The power and the pathos of that section of the history are unrivalled, and rightly admired by all readers; but Thucydides makes the downfall of the expedition into such an unmitigated disaster that the swift recovery of Athens, and the continued resilience of the city for the remaining years of war, come as something of a surprise.¹⁰ It seems that it is not only Homer who can be accused of 'poetic' exaggeration. Some critics, notably Tony Woodman in his stimulating (1988) book, have gone a long way down this road, presenting the ancient historians as above all dramatic narrators, concerned to arouse the same powerful emotional reactions from their audiences as epic and tragic poets.¹¹ Students of narratology have enhanced our awareness of the artifice with which a historian can project his viewpoint and highlight the points which need to be emphasized.¹² Many modern theorists have gone further still, emphasizing the subjective nature of all narrative reconstruction, even that of eyewitnesses, and doubting the possibility of separating historical and fictional narrative.¹³ Whatever position one takes on that debate, it is clear that both Herodotus and Thucydides use many literary devices which have precedent in epic, and the rest of this paper will illustrate some of these.

II

Let us turn back to Homer. There was a time when criticism of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* concentrated above all on the processes by which the poems attained their present form, first in the old analyst-versus-unitarian debates, then in the 'oralist' controversies arising

¹⁰ Hornblower (2008), 752 (on 8.1.3), 1029 (on 8.96.1).

¹¹ Woodman (1988), esp. 1–69. As he points out, this approach is clearly that of the ancient critics, e.g. Dion. Hal. *Thuc.* 15, Plut. *De gloria Athen.* 347ab (citing Thuc. 4.11–12 and 7.71). Woodman's position is extreme, and has been criticized e.g. by Pelling (1990), Rhodes (1994), Bosworth (2003).

¹² De Jong (1987) blazed the trail for classicists; on Thucydides see Hornblower (1994), Rood (1998).

¹³ For a valuable account relating these debates to Thucydidean studies, see Dewald (2005), 1–22.

from the Parry-Lord theory of composition. A more moderate agnostic position with a unitarian tendency now seems to prevail. In the recent commentaries and studies, critics more and more seem willing to contemplate the poems as substantially unified works of art. Whereas Parry laid much greater emphasis on the tradition behind Homer and minimized the contributions of an individual poet, it is now widely felt that the *Iliad* represents something extraordinary, a monumental creation which must embody a substantial creative effort by a particularly gifted poet composing on what was probably an unusual scale. The *Odyssey*, if rightly seen as a 'sequel' to the *Iliad*, follows its lead, and it is less surprising that the same poet or a successor attempted something on the same scale and dealing with many of the same characters or themes. The advent of literacy seems a plausible stimulus to the *Iliad*-poet, which might explain the sheer magnitude, density, and quality of the work produced; but the argument does not depend on that assumption. What matters is that the *Iliad*-poet planned the *Iliad* as a complex whole (though analytical arguments may still be applied to certain sections which seem extraneous, e.g. the notorious Doloneia).

Among the techniques that unify that complex whole, a few deserve special emphasis. One is the device of *direct foreshadowing*—explicit comment by the poet, anticipating and preparing the audience for future events. Achilles calls Patroclus forth from the hut, wishing to send him off on a mission: 'Hearing him he came forth from the hut, an equal to Ares, and that was the beginning of his doom' (11.603–4). Homer is already paving the way for Patroclus' return, when he will plead with Achilles to send him out. A similar effect is achieved by prophecy, as when Zeus foretells subsequent events to Athena and Hera (books 8 and 15); since the human characters do not share the knowledge he imparts, this makes for dramatic irony. Foreshadowing may also be *implicit*, often a mere hint or symbolic moment, as when Patroclus dons Achilles' armour but is obliged to leave behind the mighty spear 'which no other of the Achaeans could wield, but only Achilles could wield it' (16.141 f.). The symbolism is clear: Patroclus is trying to play a part he cannot sustain, for he is a lesser man.

Another important device is *repetition*, of scene and situation. Repetition is often most significant for what is different, not what is the same. Sometimes the difference is so marked that the later case constitutes a *reversal* of the earlier. The point may be illustrated from

a relatively clear case, the appearance of Andromache in books 6 and 22. In the former she is not at home when Hector returns, but has anxiously rushed to the wall; he finds her there, they converse, and he tells her to go home to mind her household and see to her weaving. Thereafter he leaves the city: in his house they 'mourned for Hector although he still lived' (500). In book 22 we have a clear reversal: Hector dies on the plain, but his wife is at home, seeing to the household tasks as he had told her, and prepares the bath for his return. A number of more specific parallels reinforce this link: in both scenes Andromache is described as a bacchic figure, in both she recalls her family and her marriage, and in both she expresses her concern for her son (in 22 she refers to his name in lines which closely resemble the narrator's introduction of the boy in 6). The correspondence between the scenes is plainer because Andromache and Astyanax have not reappeared in the poem at any point in between (cf. the links between Thetis' appearances to Achilles in books 1 and 18). These links reinforce the tragedy and our sense of Andromache's loss: in book 6 we witness Hector's heroism and loving concern, and see how well matched the couple are; in book 22 we feel all the more acutely the absence of Hector and the pathos of Andromache's obedient concern for his wishes.

Other such linked scenes are well known: for instance (perhaps the clearest case) the analogies between the death scenes of Patroclus and Hector, including not only prophecy by the victim of the victor's future doom but also exact repetition of the lines describing the moment of death. The parallels here are too prominent, the occasions too important, to be coincidental: books 16 and 22 belong together and are part of the same design.¹⁴ Equally clear, to my mind, are most of the connections which have been discerned between books 1 and 24: the conclusion of the epic recalls and introduces many reversals of its opening.¹⁵ Again, the scene in book 24 in which Priam successfully appeals to Achilles seems to cap and surpass the embassy scene in book 9: in both, Achilles receives an unexpected visitor or visitors by night; in both, he is offered rich compensation;

¹⁴ See esp. 16.855–7 = 22.361–3. For further details see Fenik (1968), 217, and Janko (1992) and Richardson (1993) in their commentaries on the relevant books.

¹⁵ See further Richardson (1993), 1–14, building on earlier diagrammatic theories by Myres, Whitman, and others. Richardson goes as far as one reasonably can, and some of his suggestions may be less persuasive than others.

in both, food and drink are consumed (but in 24 only after the appeal has succeeded); and in both Achilles gives a passionate statement of his disillusionment. The differences are of course equally important: Priam, a king, has come face to face with Achilles as Agamemnon did not; he has brought the treasure with him, rather than merely sending a catalogue; he humbles himself far more than the Greek ambassadors, and approaches Achilles at far greater risk. As for Achilles, his self-centred eloquence in book 9 has given way to a more sombre and compassionate mood in 24, and although still bitter, he is able to see the parallels between his own and Priam's experiences.

Bernard Fenik in a valuable discussion formulated a principle which I propose to develop in the present paper: although he did not give it this name, I generally refer to it as 'Fenik's Law'.¹⁶ This might also be called the rule of progressive iteration. The principle is that in Homer, something often happens on a smaller scale and is then developed on a larger, with more narrative impact and more emotional force. This may happen a number of times, but the last example is usually the most remarkable. One of Fenik's examples is the moment in *Odyssey* 8 in which the disguised hero, moved by the bard's song, sheds a tear and conceals his distress, but Alcinous notices. This happens twice: in the first case Alcinous tactfully suggests a change of scene and Odysseus' grief is dispelled, so that revelation of his identity is delayed; but in the second, where the song is described in more detail, Odysseus' distress is deeper (marked by a particularly potent simile), Alcinous' curiosity gets the better of him, and he presses his guest to explain himself. Revelation and the narrative of his adventures follow.

This technique is used extensively in Homer. An example in the *Iliad* is the character of Poulydamas, the prudent Trojan who on several occasions gives advice to Hector. The last and most significant case is the one in book 18 in which Poulydamas urges withdrawal inside Troy now that Achilles has reappeared on the Greek ramparts. Hector violently rejects his counsel, insists that they remain where they are, and confidently declares his hopes of victory over Achilles. The narrator makes a rare intervention, sombrely commenting on the foolishness of the Trojans, who shout applause at the end of

¹⁶ Fenik (1974), 180–8.

Hector's tirade: '*nepioi* that they were. Pallas Athena had robbed them of their wits. They praised Hector, whose counsel was bad, but no one praised Poulydamas, who gave sound advice' (18.310–13).

Fenik's law, as we have seen, tells us to look for the ways a motif or typical scene is repeated in a later part of the poem, in a more emphatic or emotive form. My main extension of this principle is to apply it not only to motifs but to larger structural narrative units. Let us take first the *aristeia*, the sequence of victories in battle by a single hero who achieves temporary predominance on the battlefield. There are several *aristeiai* in the *Iliad* (Diomedes, Agamemnon, Patroclus, Hector): the greatest and most devastating, that of Achilles, comes last and is elaborated on the grandest scale. There is a particularly close resemblance between the *aristeia* of Diomedes in book 5 and that of Achilles: Diomedes, as has often been noted, is a kind of 'alternative' Achilles, and stands in for him in the earlier part of the poem.¹⁷ Both attack gods, both are protected by Athena, both are deceived by Apollo, both are described in godlike terms (esp. *daimoni isos*) but Diomedes fails or falls back in the very ways in which Achilles ruthlessly and fearlessly advances. Another motif which gradually increases in prominence is that of mutilation of the dead: at first mentioned only briefly, mutilation becomes a horrific threat in the mouths of major figures, and is finally executed upon Hector's corpse by the ruthless Achilles.¹⁸ In both of these cases we are dealing with repetition which involves escalation, increased violence, excess. No principle in ancient ethics is as deep-rooted as the danger of excess, whether in action or ambition. In Homer the excesses of the warrior may bring self-destruction; in history the same consequences wait on the excesses of a kingdom or empire.¹⁹ (In our own time we have seen many cases which continue to confirm this principle.)

The *Odyssey's* structure is also surely planned by a master poet, even if questions still arise about certain parts of the epic. Here too there are explicit prophecies by divinities and by the narrator; omens, dreams, and other signs anticipate the ultimate outcome; Agamemnon advises Odysseus to return in disguise and test his wife, advice which Athena reinforces and which the hero follows in the

¹⁷ Cf. Andersen (1975); Macleod (1982), 25 n.

¹⁸ Detailed exposition by Segal (1971).

¹⁹ Griffin (1987). See more generally Tarrant (1976) on Sen. *Agam.* 57 f. (pp. 180–3).

second half of the poem. As for backward references, we may note that the hero himself recalls past experiences and can even draw comfort from them (20.18–22, looking back to the Cyclops episode; see also the summary of his adventures at 23.310 ff.).

Two structural divisions in the poem are particularly marked, and many links bridge these divisions. The first is at the end of book 4, when we pass from the Telemachy to our first actual encounter with the hero: the *reprise* of the divine council at the opening of book 5 should be seen as indicating this fresh start (as opposed to the old analytical approach which saw this as evidence of textual disruption).²⁰ The second is the division of the poem into two halves (wanderings and Ithaca, sea and land, journey home and events at home). The break at the end of the first half seems to be indicated by the strong closure of 13.88–92, which includes reminiscence of the proem and suggests that at least some of the hero's troubles are over.

I have argued elsewhere that events in Phaeacia (books 6–8), including the hero's self-revelation at a feast, prefigure the events in the longer narrative of his return to Ithaca.²¹ Despite initial misgivings, he finds kindness and hospitality in unfamiliar Phaeacia; it is in his own native land that the real dangers wait, and it is there that his disguise must be sustained on peril of death. There are also lesser analogies between the adventures of Telemachus and those of his father (for instance, in the way that both advance from pessimism and inertia to a more active and positive attitude). The other motif which runs through the second half in particular is that of testing others. The key examples are in book 13 (Athena advises Odysseus to follow this practice, having already shown him the way by testing and outwitting him), book 19 (Penelope unsuccessfully tests her husband), book 23 (where she redeems this failure and even caps Athena, forcing Odysseus to give himself away, losing his self-command), and finally book 24 (Odysseus reasserts himself and tests his father, though here too the outcome takes him by surprise). These scenes seem to form a significant sequence, more elaborate and ambitious in their ironies than anything in the *Iliad*.

²⁰ Apthorp (1977). Hainsworth on the second scene (Oxford *Odyssey*, i.251–3) gives older bibliography; he still sees difficulties in accepting the *reprise* as 'authentic'.

²¹ Rutherford (1985), esp. 140–4.

III

Against this background, I turn now to Herodotus' *History*.

Although the work no doubt evolved over a considerable period of time and may well have been partly delivered in recitations at Athens and elsewhere, I take it that the text we have is indeed complete and concluded.²² Its structure has often perplexed interpreters.²³ There are no second prefaces or similar authorial indications of strong breaks (as in Thucydides and the *Aeneid*). Nor is it at all likely that he was himself responsible for the division into nine books; he probably thought in terms of a series of *logoi*, as 5.36 suggests (e.g. the Lydian *logoi*, the Scythian *logoi*).²⁴ Nevertheless, it is arguable that the work falls into two halves, the first focusing on Eastern history and the second on the Western resistance to Eastern invasion (5.28 initiates the second of these 'halves'). It need hardly be said that many digressions, transitions, and encounters between individuals (from Solon's visit onwards) cross over this division; and part of the interest of the other major geographical areas which figure in Herodotus' account (Egypt, Scythia, Africa) is that they lie between the spheres of influence of East and West. Most readers feel that there are fairly firm pauses at various points before a new phase of the narrative begins: e.g. at the end of the story of Croesus (1.94), at the end of the account of Cyrus (1.214), at the end of book 3, at 4.144, 5.27, and at or very near the beginning of book 7, where the major narrative of Xerxes' invasion begins.

In considering the large-scale structure of the *History*, an obviously important role is played by the succession of Persian kings: Cyrus and Cambyses, Darius and Xerxes, two pairs of fathers-sons; in each case the father is a success (though Cyrus' great achievement may be somewhat tarnished by his end), whereas the son is presented as bringing calamity upon his inheritance. They are compared and contrasted in many ways, both implicitly and explicitly.²⁵ It is significant that after an episode illustrating the barbaric decadence of Xerxes' court, and a story of the punishment of the sacrilegious governor Artyactes, the *History* ends with a backward glimpse of the

²² *Aliter* Asheri et al. (2007), 10–11.

²³ De Jong (2002), on 'Narrative unity and units'.

²⁴ Cf. Powell's Lexicon, s.v. *logos*, 4 e a–b.

²⁵ See esp. Immerwahr (1966), ch. 4; see also Lateiner (1989), 165 f.

idealized Cyrus, founder of the empire, but an advocate of harder and more virtuous ways (9.122). Prior to this sequence of Persian rulers comes the story of Croesus, a figure geographically closer and more familiar to the Greek reader: his story serves as a kind of paradigm which introduces many of the moral and religious premises of the *History* as a whole.²⁶ One particular link associates the first and the last major Eastern figure of the *History*: the parallel between the dialogue between Solon and Croesus, and between Artabanus and Xerxes. Both scenes involve a 'warner' figure of a kind common in Herodotus,²⁷ but these two episodes are given additional weight because of their length, the generality of the wisdom conveyed, and the vigour with which the overconfident monarch resists enlightenment. The Solon-Croesus dialogue has an obvious sequel later in book 1 (Croesus recalls the advice when placed on his pyre), and Croesus himself learns from suffering, and is able to act as adviser to Cyrus in his turn, though unsuccessfully. The scene in book 7 gains added force from our memories of book 1. It presents a tenser and more perilous occasion: Solon only warned Croesus not to be too confident in his happiness, and Solon was not himself involved in the fate of Lydia; Artabanus' warning concerns the potentially disastrous ambition to invade Europe, and he himself speaks at his own risk, and escapes punishment only because of his family relation with the king.²⁸

A further structural principle involves the series of foreign conquests, especially the campaigns of Persia, first in the East and then in the Mediterranean. Herodotus in each case narrates the conquest and its aftermath, usually including an ethnographic excursus on the people in question, their geography, *nomoi*, and so forth: already a set sequence seems to have been established (by Hecataeus and others) for this kind of ethnographic survey.²⁹ Croesus' efforts to expand and attack his neighbour Persia fail, and this prefigures Persia's subsequent failure in the attempt against Greece. Persia also fails with Scythia, a difficult and extended episode which seems to be principally intended as a foil to the Greek campaign, illustrating

²⁶ Hellmann (1934), Pelling (2006a).

²⁷ See Lattimore (1939), and Bischoff (1932).

²⁸ For discussion of other parallels and differences between the episodes see Solmsen (1974); von Fritz (1967), i. 208–79, 442–75; Gould (1989), 121 ff.

²⁹ Trüdinger (1918), R. F. Thomas (1982).

another kind of people, which is again alien to Persian understanding and which achieves its goal of independence from Darius by evasion rather than by confrontation and battle.³⁰ The point made at 1.4, that the Persians regard Asia as their natural domain, is restated at 9.116, close to the final page, underlining the fact that they have attempted to go beyond their natural realm. This example of ring-composition may provide a further proof that the *History* is complete at the end of book 9.

Another large-scale link is between the digressions on Athenian and Spartan archaic history in books 1 and 5. Similar in scale and purpose (to provide the reader with the information needed to understand the role of these states in what follows), they are clearly related: the second presupposes and proceeds from the first. They are also introduced in a comparable way: in each case, a figure in the East requires allies from the West (Croesus and Aristagoras).

A third group of passages in which we can see Herodotus keeping an eye on his larger theme concerns the conquests of Ionia. Ionia was subjugated, he tells us, its cities were enslaved three times, first by Croesus, then by Cyrus, and thirdly by Darius through Artaphernes (6.32). Ionia, its fate and intermediate status between East and West, is another leitmotif running through the *History*, providing an important foil to mainland Greece.³¹

Scenic sequences are another of the lessons Herodotus learned from epic. The successive exchanges between Xerxes and his 'wise advisers' are of this type: first Artabanus, then Demaratus, then Artemisia try to warn or deflect him from foolish action, just as Poulydamas does Hector. Scenes in which omens and signs are wilfully ignored or misinterpreted are also frequent. In both areas, the predominance of examples occur in the climactic books 7–9, but earlier instances have set the pattern; as is frequently the case, the Croesus-story establishes the ground rules, with his misinterpretation of the Delphic prediction. These parallels illustrate the consistency of Herodotus' narrative, the coherence of his world-view.

Another area which has been interestingly explored by Hartog and others concerns the parallels which Herodotus seems to see or imply

³⁰ On the Scythian *logos* see esp. Hartog (1988). A commentary on book 4 by S. R. West is eagerly awaited.

³¹ See further 1.141–3, 4.142, 6.7–17, 7.51–2, 8.85.1. Herodotus' attitude to the Ionians has been much discussed: see e.g. Lateiner (1982).

between the expedition against Scythia and that against Greece—links, in other words, between books 4 and 6–9.³² At 7.20 the comparison is explicit (cf. 7.10; 18.2). As implied above, there are at least as many differences of culture, military practice, and course of events; but the points which seem to deserve mention are: the parallels in the account of the pretexts and the underlying motive of conquest (4.1, 4, 118.4 ~ 6.44.1, 94.1, 7.138.1); the role of Artabanus as unsuccessful ‘adviser’ to his king (4.83 ~ 7.10–12); Darius’ surveying of the Black Sea and his bridge over the Bosphorus, compared with Xerxes’ regular occupation of a position from which he can watch events, and his bridging of the Hellespont (4.83 ff., cf. 7.44, al.); the way in which each king marvels at his own forces and at nature (4.85 ~ 7.44); the difficulty which the Scythians experience in organizing a united response (4.118–19, cf. books 6–9 *passim*; cf. esp. 4.119.3 ~ 8.142.2); the ruthless punishment of stay-at-homes (4.84 ~ 7.38); the summary and the fuller catalogue of the invader’s armies (4.87.1, in contrast with the far more extended account in 7.59–100); the emphasis on freedom (4.126–8; cf. e.g. 8.142, 144); and the bafflement of the invader at the defender’s strange ways and at their seemingly light-hearted treatment of the threat that the invader poses (4.134 ~ 8.26; cf. also 7.208, 226 [insouciance of the Spartans at Thermopylae]). The last example is part of a larger theme: the gradual way in which the Persians come to understand what their enemies are really like, moving from ignorant scorn to a more realistic confrontation of a formidable opponent.³³ This process of learning is not, of course, one-sided: the Greeks learn more about their enemies too, not always for good (think of the future of Pausanias, beyond his hour of virtuous pride at 9.82).³⁴

³² Hartog (1988), 36 ff.; Fehling (1989), 201 ff.

³³ Cf. Lewis (1977), 148 f., but I would see this as applying more widely than simply to the Spartans. The scene in which Cyrus asks ‘who are the Spartans?’ is paralleled, perhaps capped, in the episode after the burning of Sardis when Darius asks for information about the Athenians, and swears revenge (1.153 ~ 5.105)—another case of a significant correspondence between the halves of the work.

³⁴ Cf. Fornara (1971), 62–6 (all previous references to Pausanias prior to book 9 refer to his future corruption: 4.81, 5.32, 8.3). See further Pelling (2008), 98–101.

IV

Thucydides clearly lived long enough to see the defeat of Athens in 404 (2.65, 5.26, 6.15), but did not live to write an account of the whole war; his narrative breaks off in the year 411. Hence we cannot be as optimistic as we have been with the other authors in assuming that we can perceive his overall design. Both historians and literary critics have been much exercised by the question of the composition of his work. On the one hand, it affects our assessment of his historical judgement (how far is he commenting from hindsight?); on the other, ignorance of the sequence of composition inhibits us from commenting on potential echoes and ironies (did he know, when he wrote passage x, that it would later be disproved or undercut by an event to be narrated in passage y?). Despite these difficulties, in Thucydides' case as in the others, the modern tendency is to adopt a modified unitarian view. In particular, the narrative of the Archidamian War forms a highly finished and detailed narrative, and incorporates passages which postdate the end of the war. The Sicilian narrative too has clearly been worked up to a high degree. About other portions of the *History* fruitful debate will no doubt continue.³⁵

In Homer, above all in the *Iliad*, characters are defined in contrast with one another: Achilles is in various ways opposed to Agamemnon, but also to Hector, and in a few scenes with Odysseus; Hector contrasts not only with Paris, but with Poulydamas. In Herodotus we saw how, amid much else, the rulers of kingdoms in the East may be compared and contrasted (an explicit instance at 3.89). In Thucydides Pericles enjoys a privileged status despite, or perhaps because of, his early death. Other leaders are measured against his example. His successors inherit some of his gifts: thus Cleon has the outspokenness and willingness to resist the people, but Diodotus has his respect for argument and deliberative decision. The ideal of deliberation set out in the Funeral Speech (2.40), already qualified by events following the plague, is shown in debased or corrupt form in the Mytilenean debate (3.37 ff.).³⁶ A further development of this

³⁵ Rood (1998), Hornblower (1996), (2008), intro. Dewald (2005) is an important contribution which seems to establish that Thucydides' process of composition developed in a broadly linear fashion: that is, that the Archidamian books are earlier than the narrative of the Peace of Nicias, and books 6–8.

³⁶ See e.g. Bender (1938), Gomme (1951); Macleod (1983), 75, 80, 82, 92–3; Farrar (1988), 158–77.

presentation of the workings of democracy and the defects of Athens' leaders is the debate between Nicias and Alcibiades on Sicily (6.9–26). Less precise, because geographically removed, is the correspondence between Hermocrates and Pericles, Athenagoras and Cleon: this may be a matter of looser analogies rather than cross-referential links. However, Thucydides clearly did think of Syracuse as a mirror image of his own city, an alternative Athens.³⁷

Speeches play a more conspicuous part in Thucydides' *History* than in that of Herodotus. They are longer and more intellectually demanding; given the relative absence of historical analysis, they form the chief vehicle by which the historian airs the moral and abstract issues which underlie events. In the earlier authors we considered repeated sequences of events; in Thucydides linked scenes often involve linked speeches. The episodes involving judgement and punishment of Mytilene and Plataea, including the important debates on these cities, are juxtaposed and interwoven in the *History*; they are clearly meant to be read together and to illuminate each other—particularly enabling us to compare and evaluate the ways in which Athens handles her empire and Sparta handles her allies. Still more elaborate and ambitious is the comparison between the debate on the Sicilian Expedition at Athens (Alcibiades and Nicias) and the balancing debate at Syracuse regarding the prospect of Athenian invasion (Hermocrates and Athenagoras). And just as repeated lines and formulae in Homer may have very different effects in the mouths of different speakers, so too in Thucydides echoes of phrasing may serve as counterpoint to a change of situation and in the quality of leadership. The echoes of Pericles' words in the mouth of Cleon have been compared with the way in which Achilles' denunciation of Agamemnon is echoed in the mouth of Thersites.³⁸

There is also a close parallel between the Athenian self-defensive speech at Sparta in book 1 (73–8) and the speech of the Athenian

³⁷ See esp. 6.20.3, 7.55.2, 8.96.5. For his high evaluation of Hermocrates see 6.72.2.

³⁸ Most notably Pericles at 2.61.2, echoed by Cleon at 3.38.1. Macleod (1983), 93 with n. 20; Cairns (1982). Hornblower (1987), 59 makes the fair point that one politician may indeed echo or hijack another's phrases; so Cleon's words could still be 'authentic'. On a related question of authenticity, note also the parallels between Homer, *Il.* 11.604, 5.63; Hdt. 5.97.3, Thuc. 2.12.3 (the herald Melesippus). It is clear that there is a line of literary imitation here; if, as has been suggested, Ar. *Pax* 435–6 alludes to Melesippus' remark, the quotation in Thucydides is authentic, and Melesippus as well as the historian will be using a Homeric phrase at a moment of crisis.

Euphemus at Camarina in book 6 (81–7).³⁹ Opinions differ as to the significance of this parallel: is Euphemus' speech simply a Thucydidean *reprise* of favourite themes, or does it add something new, perhaps pointing to a further decline in the morality of Athenian politics?⁴⁰ In either case, the speech may serve a function as restating the ethos of Athenian imperialism at a stage in the second phase of the war where hostilities are once more underway but where, as in book 1, effective resistance from Sparta has yet to be mobilized.

One area in which we can see continuity across our authors is in the 'wise adviser' figure, the prudent character who gives much-needed warning to a misguided leader, but whose advice is almost invariably ignored. We have mentioned Poulydamas in the *Iliad*; the prophet Theoclymenus in the *Odyssey* is another case. Herodotus is particularly fond of this type: not only Solon and Artabanus, but Amasis giving counsel to Polycrates, and many others. In many of the earlier cases those who give this advice are not directly involved in the consequences. Theoclymenus utters dire warnings to the suitors but then marches out of Odysseus' palace and never appears again. Solon advises Croesus but then proceeds on his wanderings. The same generally applies to the similar cases in tragedy, such as Hippolytus' attendant or Tiresias in various plays. Thucydides exploits the motif, but his advisers are also directly involved in the action. This is true of the Spartan king Archidamus; it is especially true of Nicias, who tries his best to argue against the Sicilian Expedition but is himself entrammelled in it and forced to share the command with his adversary. His own character proves to be such as to ensure his defeat.⁴¹

The disaster in Sicily constitutes the climax of the *History* as we have it. Here too there are significant links to other episodes. The great sea battle at Syracuse is prefaced by speeches which correspond in detail to the speeches made before the *first* wartime battle narrated at length in the *History*, the clash between the Athenian general

³⁹ De Romilly (1963), 242 ff., 250; Strasburger (1958), at 29 ff. (= Rusten 2009, at 207–11); Dover, in Gomme et al. (1970) 353 f.

⁴⁰ A version of the latter position is argued well by Connor (1984), 183–4.

⁴¹ Marinatos (1980). For Thucydides on Nicias see further Westlake (1968), chs. 6 and 11; Dover, in Gomme et al. (1970), 426, 461–4; Rusten (2009), 509–11.

Phormio and the Spartan fleet off Naupactus in 429 (2.83–92).⁴² In book 2, a speech by the Peloponnesian commanders is answered by a speech of Phormio (87, 88–9), and the gloom and discouraging notes in the Peloponnesian oration clearly foreshadow their defeat.⁴³ In book 7, it is Nicias who speaks first, and with characteristic pessimism; the speech of Gylippus⁴⁴ makes powerful and effective response (7.61–4 [Nicias], 66–8 [Gylippus]). The outcome is of course an Athenian defeat. The verbal echoes concern the transformation of a *naumachia* into a *pezomachia* (2.89.8, 7.62.2), and the difficulties caused by a narrowly restricting space (*stenochoria*, 2.89.8, 7.87.2).⁴⁵

Further, the events in the Sicilian harbour explicitly reverse the Athenian victory at *Pylos*, in 425, where again the language of *naumachia/pezomachia* was used (4.14.3, cf. 12.3, 40.1–3).⁴⁶ At 7.71.7, after the defeat in the harbour, Thucydides writes: ‘The present shock was not less than any before this. What had happened to the Athenians was much the same as they had achieved at *Pylos*. There the Spartans first lost their ships and then also the men they had transported to *Sphacteria*; and now the Athenians [*sc.* having lost their ships] had no hope of gaining safety by land unless something improbable came about.’ The historian in his own voice compares *Pylos* to *Thermopylae* (4.36.2). We may add that the presence of Demosthenes, who had succeeded at *Pylos*, and of Nicias, who had helped negotiate the peace which restored the Spartan prisoners, inevitably brings that episode to mind. It is hard to evade the conclusion that Thucydides planned the finale of book 7 with an eye on the relevant parts of book 2 and book 4.

Many devices are employed to bring out the pity and the horror of this climax. Most memorable of all is the way in which the conclusion recalls the beginning of the expedition (reversal). The scene in which the fleet sets out from Athens, a magnificent set piece (6.30–32.2), is pathetically echoed at the beginning of the dismal withdrawal of the army from Syracuse overland (7.75). Thucydides himself spells out the bitterness of the outcome:

⁴² The parallels are neglected in the commentaries of Rusten and Rhodes; but see Hornblower on 1.49.2.

⁴³ Cf. Hornblower (1991), 367–8.

⁴⁴ I take it as his, despite the reservations of Dover, in Gomme et al. (1970), 444.

⁴⁵ The fact that these motifs are anticipated earlier in book 7 (36.4, 44.2, 70.6) does not alter the clearly parallel construction of these episodes.

⁴⁶ Macleod (1983), 142–6.

This sharing of hardship in their general degradation had at least the consoling aspect of ‘safety in numbers’, but even so was not easy to accept at the time, especially when they thought of what initial brilliance and pride had come to such a humiliating end. This was indeed the greatest reverse (μέγιστον γὰρ δὴ τὸ διάφορον) experienced by any Greek army. They had come with the intention of enslaving others, and now found themselves leaving in fear of enslavement themselves; they had set out to the accompaniment of paeans and prayers for success, and were now retreating with quite different imprecations in their ears; they were on foot, not on ship, and reliant now on infantry rather than navy. And yet the magnitude of the danger still hanging over them made all this seem bearable. (7.75.7, trans. Hammond (2009), with slight modification)⁴⁷

At several points towards the close of this episode Thucydides mentions that the disaster is on the scale of the sack of a city: this very chapter includes the comment that ‘they looked like nothing so much as a column of refugees from a city taken by siege, and a large city at that’ (7.75.5. Cf. 64 [Nicias], 77.4 and 7 [Nicias]). The exaggeration is patent, though moving nevertheless. The sack of a city was a source of intense pathos in poetry: the fall of Troy was foreshadowed repeatedly in the *Iliad* (e.g. 18.207–14, 22.410–11). How Thucydides would have handled the eventual siege and defeat of Athens is unknowable, but there can be little doubt that he is foreshadowing that defeat here. Of course, in the end Athens was not actually sacked, but placed temporarily under Spartan control. By giving this highly emotive treatment to the earlier episode, building it up to be a sack of Athens at one remove, the historian manages to have his cake and eat it.

V

How and where literary works end is by now a well-established area of research.⁴⁸ The issue is particularly acute with very long works: if you have already gone on for 15,000 lines, why not more? The last book of Vergil’s *Aeneid* is longer than any of the preceding books, yet the narrative terminates mid-scene, almost mid-blow. Vergil’s

⁴⁷ Compare the contrast between Hector’s dark hair and his head, ‘fair before’, and its degradation after his death (*Il.* 22.401–4).

⁴⁸ See esp. Smith (1968), Fowler (1989); Roberts, Dunn, and Fowler (1997). On the historians see Marincola (2005).

predecessors did not handle closure with such startling abruptness. Homer's poems reach their long-awaited climaxes in what we call book 22 of each poem, with the death of Hector and the slaughter of the suitors; but that does not conclude the action. Less frantic narrative and gentler emotions are allowed to come to the fore. More important, the *Iliad* ends with much still unsettled. The death of Achilles and the taking of Troy are still in the future, though plainly foreshadowed; the deaths of Priam and Astyanax, the firing of the city, are foreseen by participants and narrator alike. The *Odyssey* is less pressing in guiding our thoughts to the future, but here too the narrative is brought to a temporary halt, since the story of Odysseus' wanderings is not over. He has 'unmeasured toil, long and difficult' still to undergo, in order to placate the continuing wrath of Poseidon (23.248–50).

Herodotus too brings his narrative gradually to a close, with much still in store. Here also the apparent climax, the victory at Plataea, does not mark the terminus; nor does the parallel battle at Mycale. The narrative continues far enough to trace the beginnings of the counter-attack by Greece against Persian rule in the Aegean, the earliest stages of the development of the Delian League; and the Athenians, who will in due course claim hegemony in that League, are prominent in these chapters. But the last few chapters also shed varied light on Persia; their contribution to the whole has been much discussed.⁴⁹ The Athenian shape of things to come is at least prefigured; the episodes in Persia show something of the perils of absolute monarchy, the decadence of modern Persia in contrast with the wiser counsels of Cyrus; but what are the connections between these passages? Can Herodotus really be expecting us to see the Athenians as potentially Persian tyrants in the making? Or is the historian insisting that we ponder both similarities and contrasts between East and West?⁵⁰ At any rate, it is very clear that epic led the way in encouraging both the authors and the readers of histories to 'look to the end', and also beyond it.

How Thucydides would have treated the end of the war, we do not know. A bold monograph by Rawlings attempted to hypothesize the possible contents of 'Thucydides books 9 and 10', starting from the premise that Thucydides saw two phases of the war and devised

⁴⁹ e.g. Stadter (1992), Moles (1996), Boedeker (1988), Dewald (1997).

⁵⁰ Pelling (1997).

corresponding episodes between these phases.⁵¹ Reviewers and others have naturally treated this approach with reserve: it is one thing to trace patterns in an extant text, or even to theorize about the patterns which may have structured a lost work, but quite another to deduce the patterns that might have occurred in a text which *ex hypothesi* never existed. Nevertheless, I am intrigued by one of his arguments, that the Melian Dialogue in book 5, which treats the fate of those who rebel against Athens' dominion, might have been balanced in the final phase of the war by an Athenian Dialogue, arguing with similar harsh realpolitik over the fate of Athens itself in 404 (but who would speak in such a debate? Would the Athenians be permitted to defend themselves, or should we think rather of Corinthians and Thebans arguing the same case before the Spartans?).⁵² These speculations cannot have evidential force. But Thucydides would not have had to live far beyond the defeat of Athens to witness the fast-growing unpopularity of her conquerors (talk of Spartan liberation of the Greeks is already treated sceptically in the body of the *History*). In book 1, during the debate at Sparta prior to the outbreak of war, the Athenians advise the Spartans: 'without doubt if you were to remove us and make your own empire, you would quickly lose the goodwill you have gained through others' fear of us, especially if you show the same attitude as you did earlier in your brief command against the Persians' (1.77.6). Whatever the date at which these words were written, they are prophetically accurate.⁵³

VI

The topic of closure provides a transition to my own ending. To summarize: I have argued first that Homer was inevitably and constantly a gigantic presence in the background for both Herodotus

⁵¹ Rawlings (1981): see e.g. the reviews by Westlake (1982), 232–4, and Hornblower (1982), 157.

⁵² The hypothesis is also taken seriously by Hornblower (2008), 235–6 (he notes that Rawlings acknowledges that this theory was originally proposed by Regenbogen).

⁵³ We may compare the effect of Hdt. 5.93.1, where Hippias predicts that the Corinthians will one day rue the day that they helped oust the Pisistratids from Athens. This anticipates Corinthian hostility to Athens in the lead-up to the Peloponnesian War: cf. Pelling (2008), 101, with older references.

and Thucydides, that they measure their own subject matter and themes against those of the Homeric poems, particularly the *Iliad*, and that whatever influence lost sources may have had, Homer provided the central model for sustained historical narrative. More specifically, I have tried to show that some favourite structural techniques used by Homer are also exploited by the historians, in particular scenic sequences, progressive iteration, and ironic reversal. Repetition can also signify escalation of conflict or danger: both epic and history focus on the perils of excess. One advantage of this inheritance is that the narrative technique is highly flexible: these echoes and patterns serve to invite comparison but do not impose a rigid historical schema. That similar events may play themselves out in interestingly similar-yet-different ways does not mean we are dealing with cyclical history. Finally, I have stressed that Thucydides remains the heir of Herodotus, and so of Homer, and that we can observe this with particular clarity in the Sicilian books.⁵⁴ Much more could be said—on use of epic vocabulary,⁵⁵ on specific echoes of the Herodotean text,⁵⁶ on passages where Thucydides reads Homer through a Herodotean filter,⁵⁷ on ways in which he diverges from Herodotean practice while still drawn back to the epic roots,⁵⁸ or places where he cuts loose from both.⁵⁹ Even at the opening of the twenty-first century, we still have much to discover about these inexhaustible authors.

⁵⁴ For other aspects see Rood (1999), reviving in much more convincing form the theory of Cornford (1907) that Thucydides in the debate on Sicily has as his model Herodotus' account of the debate in Persia at 7.8–11; also important notes by Hornblower (2008), e.g. 546, 654–5 on catalogues, 691, 700, 708–9 (on 7.75), 711.

⁵⁵ Smith (1900), Allison (1997).

⁵⁶ See e.g. 7.87.6 in relation to Hdt. 2.120.2 (Hornblower 2008, 745).

⁵⁷ See e.g. Thuc. 7.81.4 *ἐβάλλοντο περισταδόν* (they were subject to a barrage from all around), a double allusion, looking back through Hdt. 7.225.3 to *Iliad* 13.551 (Allison 1997, 511–12; Hornblower 2008, 730). The rare word *περισταδόν* guarantees the allusion (up to the end of the 5th cent. only in these three passages and in one of Euripides—a messenger speech describing Neoptolemus being stoned at Delphi).

⁵⁸ Thucydides' *aristeia* of Brasidas is perhaps an example of this. Herodotus' singling out of heroic individuals who excelled in particular conflicts is normally a matter of specific praise in a single chapter (see e.g. 7.226–7, 9.71–5, 105). Thucydides' extended treatment of Brasidas' successes is more like Homer's practice. On the Brasidas-narrative as an *aristeia* see Hornblower (1996), 38–60, 228.

⁵⁹ An example here might be the detailed description of the plague's symptoms (where there is clearly some debt to medical discourse, cf. 2.49.3 and Hornblower 1991, 316 ff.), or the more theoretical analysis of *stasis*.

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Thucydides as ‘Reader’ of Herodotus

Philip A. Stadter

Not until his own history was already under way would Thucydides have been able to read the written text of Herodotus, in which the elder historian had linked his oral presentations of his investigations into a single work. Thucydides states that he began his history as soon as the war started, while our text of Herodotus refers to events of the first two years of the war.¹ It is probable that Thucydides first heard some of Herodotus’ narratives orally, and only later had occasion to read the written text. Nevertheless, we can recognize Thucydides’ reaction to Herodotus’ historical techniques and to the complex world-view expressed in his individual stories and in the work as a whole. Thucydides’ effort to comprehend and interpret this polyphonic text, in a word, his ‘reading’ of Herodotus, found concrete expression in his own history.

It is well known that Thucydides’ history is quite different from Herodotus’. Despite certain common features—their monumentality, their common debt to Homer, their use of reported speeches, and so on—Thucydides writes of the present, not the past, and almost completely abandons several distinctive Herodotean features: geography, ethnography, and especially the captivating stories, similar to folk tales, of Greek and oriental despots. However, Thucydides did not entirely reject the historical programme of Herodotus, but admired and absorbed Herodotus’ work, and responded in a way which he thought better expressed some of Herodotus’ insights.

The American writer James Baldwin offers a suggestive parallel.

¹ Thuc. 1.1.1, referring to spring 431; Herodotus alludes to events of 431 and 430 (7.233, 9.73, 7.137).

Richard Wright had achieved an unexpected success in 1940 with his angry novel, *Native Son*. One of those most impressed was the 20-year-old Baldwin, who wangled a meeting with Wright, showed him pages of a novel he was planning, and sought his aid. Wright assisted him then and later, when both writers had moved to Paris, helped him find a room and introduced him to the editors of a small new publication, *Zero*. Soon after, Baldwin published his first article for *Zero*: an attack on Wright's *Native Son*. He went on to publish even harsher attacks, as he struggled to imagine what he wanted his own work to be.² As he said in a later interview, 'I knew Richard and I loved him. . . . I was not attacking him; I was trying to clarify something for myself.'³ Sometimes rejection of an admired earlier writer and reformulation of his ideas are the strongest praise a successor can give. When the world is changing drastically and speaking the truth is a moral necessity, it is the only course.

So it was with Thucydides. As he lived through the Peloponnesian War and composed his own history, he appropriated and reinterpreted the work of Herodotus.⁴ He shares basic assumptions on the importance of a truthful record and the difficulty of gathering accurate information.⁵ Both writers believe their history corrects and supplants the poetic tradition through its concern for accuracy and the magnitude of the events treated.

Thucydides' recognition of his predecessor is indicated by many factors. Most obviously, he appears to rely heavily on Herodotus for his understanding of the Persian Wars and the events preceding them, and to assume knowledge of him in his readers.⁶ The *Pentecontaetia*, his excursus on the distant antecedents of his war, begins at the very point where Herodotus left off, the return from the Hellespont after the siege of Sestos.⁷ In addition, speakers in Thucydides regularly describe the past in terms absolutely consistent

² Pierpont (2009), 103. Baldwin's article, 'Everybody's Protest Novel', was reprinted in the *Partisan Review* (June 1949), then in Baldwin's *Notes of a Native Son* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), and *The Price of the Ticket* (New York: St Martin's, 1985).

³ Lester (1984).

⁴ For recent thinking on the relation of Herodotus and Thucydides, see esp. Hunter (1982), Hornblower (1987), 13–33, and in Hornblower (1996), 19–38, 122–37 (repr. from Hornblower 1992), and 137–45; Tsakmakis (1995), Corcella (2006), and Rogkottis (2006).

⁵ Cf. Fowler (1996).

⁶ See Munson, Ch. 10 in this volume.

⁷ Thuc. 1.89.2, cf. Hdt. 9.121. Cf. Hornblower (1987), 26.

with Herodotus' narrative. In fact, S. Hornblower has demonstrated that 'virtually no factual historical detail in a Thucydidean speech is not already known to us from Herodotus'.⁸ This coherence between the two authors suggests at the very least that Thucydides thought that the politicians in his history had the same factual understanding of major events of the Persian Wars that Herodotus did. But it also suggests that Thucydides shared Herodotus' understanding. Thus it is not surprising that Herodotus' account of the Persian invasion seems a subtext to Thucydides' narrative of the Athenian defeat in Sicily.⁹ Thucydides was not only familiar with Herodotus' work, in several places he makes more precise or corrects a Herodotean statement.¹⁰ This essay will present additional areas in which Thucydides' response is apparent, that is, his treatment of chronology, his allusions to events such as the battles of Thermopylae and Plataea that resonated in his own period, the opening of his history, and its first extended narrative, on Corcyra. But first it is necessary to review some considerations that warn of the uncertainties of the enterprise.

I. HERODOTUS AND THUCYDIDES: SOME CAVEATS

In the 440s and 430s BC, there was no simple tradition of the Persian Wars from which Herodotus and Thucydides could draw. Four major categories of transmission mingled: oral tradition, poetry and rhetoric, monuments and art, and religious observances. Thucydides would have had many influences besides Herodotus' spoken or written history. Oral tradition preserved memories of the roles of families and civic groups in the great war.¹¹ Herodotus recorded and validated only a portion of these; Thucydides would have had direct access to many others. His own family, with its connections to Miltiades and Cimon as well as to Thrace, would have strongly influenced his knowledge and interpretation of the war and the events that followed it. Dramas such as Aeschylus' *Persians* and celebratory compositions like Simonides' poem on Thermopylae and his

⁸ Hornblower (1992), 142 (= 1996, 123). Outside of the speeches Thucydides is freer in using other traditions.

⁹ See Rood (1999).

¹⁰ Cf. Hornblower (1996), 37 and 123 (with the entry for 1.20.3 on p. 139).

¹¹ See in general Thomas (1989).

recently discovered elegy on Plataea, along with regular allusions to the war in speeches of all sorts, preserved facts, created fictions, and shaped attitudes to the great conflict. Moreover, physical evidence of the war could be found on all sides. The Persian devastation itself (cf. Thuc. 1.89.3) and later the great temples, monuments, and public artworks erected throughout Greece provided physical reminders of the mortal risk and divinely assisted salvation of the nation. The spoils of war stored in the major sanctuaries,¹² the Athenian *odeion* built in the form of Xerxes' tent and from the masts of his ships, and the festivals celebrating the Greek victories all kept the memory of the war alive and offered interpretations of the events.

Finally, the troubled history of the intervening decades constantly led the Greek states to re-evaluate their actions in the fight for freedom: friends became enemies and enemies friends in the turmoil. Persia continued to menace the Aegean, Athens strengthened its hold on its allies, and Sparta threatened to invade and devastate Attica. Memories of the Persian War and suggestions of its present relevance swirled in the air at Athens and throughout Greece. Herodotus' own history was as much a product of this context as a contribution to it. While Thucydides was conceiving and composing his own account, Herodotus offered only one of a multitude of interpretations of the past, though a magnificent one.

Furthermore, although we possess written texts from both authors, we cannot be sure when they were composed or made available to readers. Given the uncertainties of the relation of oral performance and written text and of the diffusion of the written text, modern attempts to date precisely the 'publication' of Herodotus' History and its reception in Athens (most often to the first half of the 420s) can only be educated guesses.¹³ As already mentioned, the last dated events in Herodotus' text belong to 431 and 430 BC (according to Thucydides) and are from the last four books, which suggests that those books were written during or after the first years of the Peloponnesian War.¹⁴ Clearly Herodotus was influenced by the

¹² Cf. Thuc. 2.13.4, with the scholiast's comment, 'the silver-footed throne and the golden sabre (ἀκινάκη)'.

¹³ See Fornara (1971a, 1971b, 1981); Cobet (1977); Hornblower (1996), 25–8.

¹⁴ 7.233.2 (=Thuc. 2.2, the attack on Plataea, spring 431); 9.73 (Thuc. 2.19, after the first Spartan invasion of Attica, summer 431); 6.91 (=Thuc. 2.27, the removal of the Aeginetans, summer 431); 7.137 (=Thuc. 2.67, the execution of the Spartan envoys, late summer 430). Rösler (2002), 80, notes the concentration in the last books.

events at the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, and no doubt by the contemporary public discussion as well. A possible *terminus post quem* for Herodotus' written text may be found in his silence on later events. In particular, there is no explicit allusion to the stasis in Corcyra or to the suppression of the Mytilenean revolt in 428. This is significant, since Herodotus' persistent emphasis on Samos and Samian freedom certainly must be tied to the Athenian defeat of the revolting Samians in 440–439. If Mytilene plays no noteworthy role in his history, it is likely that Herodotus' written text was substantially completed before 428, and could have been available to Thucydides relatively early in the process of composition.

Finally, although Thucydides cannot have seen Herodotus' final written text until after 430 BC, when he had already begun composing, it is probable that he heard Herodotus give oral presentations of his research.¹⁵ There is a tradition of Herodotus giving readings at Athens and other cities. These would not have been readings of the sort we associate with modern authors reading from their works, but oral performances, like those of the sophists, or more informal presentations, suitable for casual venues, at symposia, in the gymnasias, or in private homes.¹⁶ These may have been supplemented by piecemeal written texts. Thus Thucydides, at least for the early work on his history, could have learned Herodotus' views not from our text, but from hearing him speak and perhaps reading (or having read to him) sample pieces before the written text we possess became available. In fact, Herodotus may have continued to make oral presentations even after the completion of his book. Moreover, if in the years Herodotus was composing Thucydides had expressed his own thinking in public, orally or in writing, he could have influenced the older writer as well.¹⁷ When we speak of Thucydides as reader of Herodotus, then, we must realize that the word 'reading' is used in the critics' sense of 'interpreting, understanding' and is not restricted to an individual poring over a roll or codex.

¹⁵ This is true even if the anecdote of Thucydides weeping at hearing Herodotus (Marcellinus *Vit. Thuc.* 54) is dismissed as a later invention. Plutarch reports stories that Herodotus was paid ten talents by the Athenians, but nothing by the Thebans, *De Hdt. mal.* 862B (Diyllus, *FGrHist* 73 F 3), 864D (Aristophanes of Boeotia, 379 F 5). On the disputed possibility and nature of Herodotus' oral performances, cf. Johnson (1994) (negative); Corcella (1992), 446–8; Thomas (1992), 123–7 and (2000), 4–17; Hornblower (1996), 25–8; Stadter (1997a); and Dorati (2000), 17–52 (positive).

¹⁶ See Thomas (2000); Stadter (1997a) and (1997b).

¹⁷ Cf. e.g. Irwin (2007), 220–3.

With these caveats in mind, we may consider some features in Thucydides' history which appear to represent a clear response to Herodotus.

II. CHRONOLOGY

On a very practical level, the most notable fact about Thucydides' history is the extremely conscious and consistent way in which he recorded his war according to the summers and winters of each year.¹⁸ It is perhaps not sufficiently appreciated that Herodotus employed this method before him. As is often noted, Herodotus, in recording the expansion of the Persian Empire, used a large-scale chronology, based on the reigns of the four Persian kings, marking at the death of each king the years of his reign.¹⁹ Within these units the individual narratives or *logoi* are linked loosely one to another.

However, with the beginning of the Ionian Revolt in 499, he employed a chronology setting major events in relation to each other by years, so that he established a sequence for the years 499–479. In the segment prior to Xerxes' expedition, he marked the year intervals, but gave only occasional references to the campaigning seasons, that is, to spring as the beginning of campaigns, and to winter as a time of enforced delay.²⁰ For the two years of Xerxes' expedition, however, Herodotus indicates clearly the years and the seasons within them. Campaigns begin in the spring and last until winter, when military operations cease. We read that Xerxes wintered with his troops in Sardis, then 'with the spring'—this is 480 BC—he set out from Sardis (7.37.1, cf. 7.20.1). The events of the year follow, down to the battle of Salamis. Then, after Xerxes' retreat, the Persian commander Mardonius decided that the season for fighting was over, and that he would winter in Thessaly, and return to attack the Peloponnese in the spring (8.113.1, cf. 8.126.2, 129.3). The Persian fleet, instead, wintered at Cyme on the Asiatic coast, and then in the

¹⁸ Cf. Thuc. 2.1 and 5.20.

¹⁹ A recent overview in Cobet (2002).

²⁰ Year notices: 6.31.1, 6.42.1, 6.43.1, 6.46.1, 6.95.1–2, 7.1.3, 7.4, 7.7, 7.20.1. Campaigning seasons: 5.31.4, 6.31.1, 6.43.1. See most fully Strasburger (1956), 151–4 = (1962), 711–15, who however does not note the division into campaigning seasons.

spring of 479 BC gathered at Samos (8.130.1). Spring also roused the Greek naval forces from their cities, where they had wintered (8.124.1). The fleet gathered at Aegina (8.131.1), and then, while Mardonius was still wintering in Thessaly, sailed to Delos (8.133.1). The next land campaign year began when, immediately after Alexander of Macedon's return to Thessaly, Mardonius moved south into Boeotia and Attica, as the Athenians fled before him to Salamis (9.1.1, 3.2). The rest of the Greek land forces began their march only later, much to the frustration of the Athenians (9.6–11, 12.1, 15.1, 19.1–2). There follow the events of summer 479, the battles of Plataea and Mycale, the Peloponnesian fleet's return home, and the remaining Greek fleet's operations in the Hellespont. Finally, after the return of the Athenian fleet to Greece, the campaigns of the year end (9.121). Herodotus found that the best way to treat Xerxes' expedition was by summers and winters.

Thucydides, in writing his history, decided to use the procedure utilized by Herodotus for the Persian campaign, but went one step further. Instead of introducing the seasons and years casually, as part of the narrative, he decided to make these notices formal and regular, establishing an unmistakably clear chronological framework. He explicitly announces his practice at the beginning of the war, '[The war] is recorded in order as each event occurred by summers and winters' (2.1.1), and justifies it at the end of the Archidamian War (5.20). Each summer and winter is formulaically concluded and the beginning of the new season indicated (e.g. 3.102.7–103.1: *καὶ τὸ θέρος ἐτελεύτα . . . τοῦ ἐπιγιγνομένου χειμῶνος*), and the year end solemnly sealed with the author's name (e.g. 3.116.3, the end of the sixth year: *καὶ ἔκτον ἔτος τῷ πολέμῳ ἐτελεύτα τῷδε ὃν Θουκυδίδης ξυνέγραψεν*).²¹ The difference of presentation from Herodotus represents a change of attitude, which substitutes the useful for the pleasurable. Herodotus' indications of time do not interrupt the flow of the narrative; Thucydides', instead, provide clear headings, as in a handbook or engineering treatise.²² Thucydides has heard Herodotus, understood what he wanted to do, and improved upon it, and thus created a new kind of history. Despite their appreciation of Thucydides' method, in their own histories modern historians tend to imitate Herodotus.

²¹ Except that is, for the first book, which as a prologue to the war, is arranged achronologically in interrelated *logoi*. In 5.25–116, the authorial seal is missing.

²² On the character of the narrator in Thucydides' history, see Rood (2004).

III. THUCYDIDES AND 'HERODOTEAN' EVENTS

Pylos and Thermopylae

Thucydides' references to events to which Herodotus had given particular attention enrich the emotional and conceptual importance of the incidents in his own history. Thus he alludes to the battle of Thermopylae at the time of the Athenian encirclement of the Spartans on Sphacteria that forced the latter to surrender. Thucydides writes (4.36.3), 'The Spartans were now being struck by missiles from both sides and found themselves in the same situation, to compare great with small, as that of Thermopylae. Those men were destroyed when the Persians came round by the path (*atrapos*); these, when they were pelted by missiles from both sides, no longer held their ground, but, because they were few fighting against many and their bodies were weak from lack of food, they were retreating, and the Athenians gained control of the approaches.' The comparison is suggested by the presence of a small band of trapped Spartans who had been attacked from the rear by men who had come by a circuitous route.²³ Names also play their part: Thucydides' usual name for the location of this incident is Pylos, an echo of Thermopylae, though he does not call attention to this (Sphacteria is only named once, at 4.8.6, after which it is simply 'the island'). Finally, the word *atrapos* used by Thucydides is the word with which Herodotus describes the Persian route.

Herodotus uses *atrapos* only of this path, employing the word ten times in the six chapters 7.212–17.²⁴ Examination demonstrates that he gives the *atrapos* extraordinary emphasis in his account of Thermopylae. Before the Persians learned of the path, they made no headway against the Greeks—in fact Xerxes leaps three times from his chair in fear for his army (7.212). This story and the details which follow rhetorically magnify the path's importance. Herodotus reports Ephialtes' revelation of the path to Xerxes, then Ephialtes' punishment, and an alternate story of another traitor, only to

²³ The Messenian general's advice to Demosthenes and Cleon is parallel to Ephialtes' to Xerxes. Thucydides forces the parallel: Herodotus' ἀτραπός was well known to the local inhabitants and had in fact been defended, whereas in 425 the Messenians made their own path across the rocks. Note also διέφθειρε at Hdt. 7.213, διεφθάρησαν at Thuc. 4.36.3.

²⁴ He foreshadows its importance in another reference at 7.175.2.

reaffirm Ephialtes' guilt emphatically: 'Since Ephialtes is the one who led [the Persians] around the mountain by the *atrapos*, I set him down as responsible' (7.214.3). The narrative resumes for a moment, as Xerxes appoints Hydarnes to lead a troop of Persians along the path, but is immediately interrupted by a notice of the previous dark history of the path and by a description of the path itself, and its name, Anopaia (7.215–16). When the Persians finally reach the top at dawn, action stops once more, as we learn more of the Phocian volunteers posted to guard the path for Leonidas (7.217). In Herodotus' version, it is only Ephialtes' betrayal of the *atrapos* that causes the Spartan sacrifice. Herodotus thus makes the *atrapos* a major element of his story and the one that gave Leonidas and his Spartans the opportunity for their glorious last stand. Thucydides appropriates the word for his own dramatic scene.

But what does Thucydides mean by 'as great to small'? The number of men involved was similar: 300 were killed at Thermopylae (Hdt. 7.224.1; but two were missing, 7.229–32), eight less than 300 were captured at Pylos (4.38.5; this included 128 Spartiates) of the 420 hoplites who had crossed over to the island. The battle of Thermopylae was 'great' because it was heroic, and it seemed heroic exactly because Leonidas and the other Spartans chose to die, even when surrounded by an innumerable host.²⁵ The event at Pylos was 'small', because the Lacedaemonians there agreed to surrender, but also because of the different circumstances. At Thermopylae, the enemy was Xerxes with his barbarian army, coming to enslave Greece; at Pylos, it was Cleon, Demosthenes, and the Athenians. At Thermopylae, the Spartans had died nobly, winning undying glory (cf. Hdt. 7.220.2, 4) and setting an example of resistance to the other Greeks. The freedom of Greece was preserved by such heroism. At Pylos the prize was domination of Greece. Thucydides uses the parallel with Herodotus to mark the change in Spartan

²⁵ The notion is reiterated by Herodotus, and emphasized by their fighting to the desperate end, after their spears were broken (7.224.1) and they were finally reduced to fighting with 'swords, . . . and hands and teeth' (7.225.3). On the episode, cf. Hornblower, *Comm.* to 4.36. There is an echo of Herodotus also in Thucydides' phrase πολλοῖς τε ὀλίγοι μαχόμενοι (4.36.3): at Thermopylae, Xerxes learned that πολλοὶ μὲν ἄνθρωποι εἶεν, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἄνδρες and later the Spartans slew, πλήθει ἀναριθμήτους τῶν Περσέων but lost ὀλίγοι (7.210.2, 211.3). The emphasis on the enormous number of opponents reaches its pitch in the final battle scene, 7.223–5. The opposition πολλοὶ/ὀλίγοι is frequent in pathos statements, e.g. Thuc. 7.87.6.

resolve, its effect on the Spartan legend and the Spartan self-image, and especially the different objectives for which the combatants fought.²⁶

Plataea

Thucydides' treatment of Plataea offers a fuller example of his response to Herodotus' *Histories*. In book 9, Herodotus had presented a picture of a squabbling yet finally united Greek force defeating the Persian army in the name of freedom.²⁷ Herodotus captures both the glory of the battle that ended the Persian threat in Greece and the multiple ironies in the Greeks' hesitations and tergiversations. Thucydides' account of the drama of Plataea builds on that Herodotean base an elaborate superstructure of reminiscences, contradictions, and ironies.

First, Thucydides consciously decided to begin his war with the Theban attack on Plataea, so that the site of the great victory of the two leaders of Greece became the site of the outbreak of the war between them. Since the Peloponnesian War arguably began with the Spartan invasion of Attica later in the spring, the Plataean incident could have been shunted off to one side.²⁸ By placing it first and marking this incident as the beginning of the war, Thucydides puts Herodotus' theme of Greek freedom to the fore. In Herodotus' narrative of the Persian War, the Thebans were traitors, actively aiding the Persian forces, and the Plataeans freedom fighters, aligning themselves against the Persians at Marathon, Artemisium, and Plataea itself. Moreover, as a footnote to the shameful defection of the Thebans to the Persians at Thermopylae, Herodotus recalled another instance of Theban treachery, noting that the leader of the Thebans at Thermopylae, Leontiades, was the father of the

²⁶ Perhaps Thucydides also sees meaning in the names of the Spartan commanders: Styphon (harsh, gloomy) at Sphacteria, Leonidas (son of lion) at Thermopylae. However, the battlefield succession of Styphon after two earlier commanders had died also indicates the willingness of the Spartans to take losses, as does the total of 128 lost (4.38.5). On another occasion, the Spartan foundation of Heraclea (3.92.6), Thucydides seems consciously to recall the battles of Thermopylae and Artemisium. See further Foster, Ch. 8 in this volume.

²⁷ Cf. the words of Pausanias to the Athenians: 'an extraordinary battle lies before us, over whether Greece will be free or enslaved' (Hdt. 9.60).

²⁸ Cf. on this point Hornblower (1991), 236–7 and the thorough discussion in Rawlings (1981).

Eurymachus 'whom the Plataeans killed later on, after he had led a force of 400 Thebans and seized the Plataeans' town' (7.233.2).

Thucydides' war begins from this incident, when the Thebans tried to seize Plataea for themselves in the lull before war actually broke out (2.2–6). Thucydides' starting point makes explicit the irony implicit in Herodotus' forward reference, that the new war 'for Greek freedom' begins on the very site of the heroic battle which had won Greek freedom from Persia. Although the Peloponnesians make it their rallying cry that they are fighting Athens to free Greece (cf. Thuc. 2.8.4), Thucydides reports that in the first action of the war, the Spartans' Theban allies, the very city who fifty years before had been traitors to Greece, attack in time of peace the city of those who had fought for freedom, to 'liberate' them from the Athenians. At the same time, Thucydides corrects Herodotus with more precise information: Eurymachus, son of Leontiades, one of the most powerful men in Thebes, had arranged for traitorous Plataeans to open the gates, but the actual commanders were two other men, and the Theban force was not much more than three hundred men.²⁹

The Theban attack on Plataea is the first of four acts in Thucydides' melancholy drama of that town. The second (2.71–8) narrates the beginning of the Peloponnesian siege. Here Thucydides adds new material to Herodotus' narrative. He has the Plataeans recall, in a speech to the Spartans, how the Spartan regent Pausanias, after his victory, 'having freed Greece', erected at Plataea an altar to the Zeus of Freedom and with the allies 'gave back to the Plataeans their land and city to hold and dwell in independently and [granted] that no one should ever march against them contrary to right or to enslave them' (2.71.2). This pledge protecting Plataea is not known to us from Herodotus or any other source.³⁰ Its inclusion reinforces the irony of Sparta's claim to be a champion of freedom. King Archidamus' reply is a model of sophistry: this guarantee would apply only if the Plataeans should join with the Spartans against the Athenians. The Plataeans resist, encouraged by an Athenian promise of unflinching support, emphatically reported in direct speech (2.73.2–3). Finally Archidamus—again in direct speech—invokes the very gods and heroes who had helped the Greeks to defeat the

²⁹ Thucydides records Eurymachus' execution at 2.5.7.

³⁰ It is therefore one of the few early events mentioned in a Thucydidean speech not already found in Herodotus: cf. Hornblower (1996), 132.

Persians on this spot, asking them to assist the Spartans now in defeating the Plataeans (2.74.2):

You gods and heroes who keep the land of Plataea, be witnesses that, since these men have abandoned the sworn agreement first, we have not come unjustly against this land, in which our fathers, having prayed to you, defeated the Medes and which you rendered favourable for the Greeks to fight in, nor will we act unjustly now, if we shall do anything, since our many reasonable demands have not been met. Be supportive of our punishing those who began the injustice, and let us be successful in bringing lawful vengeance.

The issue of competing claims of justice is a theme central to both Herodotus and Thucydides. Archidamus' stress on who first began the injustice recalls Herodotus' proem, where aggressors justify themselves by appealing to earlier injustice. In this situation, heavy with irony, the siege of Plataea begins.³¹

Act three (3.19–24) records the efforts of the Plataeans to resist the siege, culminating in the escape of 212 men from the besieged town. In escaping, they pass the sanctuary of the hero Andokrates (3.24.1), a landmark that in Herodotus' account of the battle of Plataea marked the site where the Greeks had encamped for twelve days, until just before the battle (9.25.3). Thucydides' implicit reference to the passage in Herodotus, or at least to the famous battle, seems a conscious reminder of the irony of the present situation: Greeks are besieging Greeks on the field of the battle for the liberty of Greece.³²

Finally, the Plataeans' alliance with Athens, whose beginning had been recorded by Herodotus (6.108.1–3) and whose reaffirmation in 432 had confirmed them in their resistance, becomes a point of contention in the debate between the Plataeans and the Thebans that dominates the fourth and final act of the Plataean drama (3.52–68).³³

³¹ Cf. also Plutarch, *Arist.* 11, who adds from other sources additional generous acts that the Plataeans had performed at Plataea towards the Greeks and the Athenians in particular. On these events see Badian (1993), 109–23 and Hammond (1992).

³² Hornblower (1996), 129 notes that Thucydides' use of the definite article to refer to the shrine shows that he 'intends his readers to remember that this landmark . . . featured in the narrative of Herodotus'. This is overstating, since the monument would have figured in the oral memory of many Greeks whose parents or relatives had fought at Plataea. Thucydides' immediately following reference to the road to Cithaeron and Dryos Kephalai might recall the many Greek reinforcements that had flowed along this road, until it was blocked by Mardonius (Hdt. 9.39, noting the capture of some five hundred ox teams bringing supplies).

³³ Cf. Hornblower (1996), 131.

At issue is the importance of remembering the past. Note, first of all, that one of the Plataean speakers is a proxenus of Sparta, named Lakon, the son of Aieimnestos (3.52.5), that is, 'Spartan, the son of Always-remember'. Now Herodotus tells us that Aieimnestos, at the time of the battle of Plataea, had been with the Spartan Callicrates as he died and heard his final utterance, that 'he did not regret dying for Greece, but that he had not struck a blow nor exhibited any worthy action, though he was eager to do so'.³⁴ Apparently Aieimnestos named his son Lakon to honour this noble Spartan. The family's proxenia may also have gone back to this occasion. Thucydides finds the name significant for the Spartan attitude towards the memory of past good deeds. Lakon and his fellow speaker remind the Spartans, in almost the same words as Herodotus (cf. Hdt. 6.108), of the beginning of their connection with Athens: how the Spartans had refused an alliance with Plataea, and had recommended that the Plataeans ally rather with the Athenians, who were closer and could defend them better, so that the Plataeans' position now is a direct result of the Spartans' former policy. They also recall the Plataeans' participation in the Persian War, when the Thebans instead had gone over to the Persians. Their breath is wasted. The Spartans execute the Plataeans, as Thucydides states, almost entirely 'for the sake of the Thebans, who they thought would be useful in the war which had now begun' (3.68.4). The Spartans choose not to remember the desertion of the Thebans at Thermopylae or the heroic struggle for liberty at Plataea fifty years before. With material from the city the Spartans later built a large visitors' hostel for the nearby sanctuary of Hera, dedications for the temple, and a new temple (3.68.3). In 479, a large part of the Greek forces had moved to the sanctuary of Hera before the battle, and it was to Hera Pausanias prayed, 'looking towards the Heraion of the Plataeans' when the Spartans were pressed at the beginning of the battle (9.52, 9.61.3). Herodotus' landmark and sign of divine favour to the Greeks was renewed with the ruins of a Greek city the Greeks had declared inviolate. So much for promises and divine protection. Finally, Athens' alliance with Plataea, the origin of which Herodotus had reported, closes the story of Plataea.

³⁴ Hdt. 9.72.2. There is a problem here, since the manuscripts of Herodotus are uncertain between Arimnestos and Aieimnestos. It seems extremely probable, however, that the same man is meant by Herodotus and Thucydides. Cf. Stein (1883–96) to Hdt. 9.72.2. Arimnestos would mean 'extremely memorable'. The text of Plutarch *Arist.* 11.5–8 has Arimnestos.

Thucydides writes the caustic comment: 'Thus ended the Plataean affair, when the Plataeans had been allies of Athens for 93 years.' The Athenians of course had not fulfilled their promise to support the Plataeans to the end.³⁵ The Plataean episodes in Thucydides form a bitter commentary on the battle for freedom at Plataea, on Spartan respect for justice, and on Athenian concern for its closest and oldest ally. Its impact depends in large part on a conscious counterpoint to Herodotus' narrative.

In this ironic contrast of great promises with demeaning reality, Thucydides in fact follows Herodotus' own understanding of history. Both consider that the Spartans acted from self-interest, both in recommending an Athenian alliance to Plataea and in executing the captured Plataeans in 427. 'The Lacedaemonians suggested this,' Herodotus writes (6.108.3), 'not so much from goodwill to the Plataeans as intending the Athenians to have trouble through their conflict with the Boeotians.' As we have seen, Thucydides sees the Spartan attitude continuing (3.68.4). While one aspect of Herodotus' work offers a glorification of the Hellenic achievement in resisting the Persians, another thread weaves an ironic counter-narrative, which reveals the weakness as well as the strength of human nature. Athens' dealings with Sparta in the winter of 480/479 offer a significant example. Their first speech (8.144), which is their reply to the Spartans after they refuse Mardonius' invitation to join him and rule Greece, is justly famous as a noble call to liberty and the defence of Hellas. In a second (9.7), just a few pages later, they indignantly attack the Spartans, who were delaying in coming to defend Boeotia and Attica, but reaffirm their commitment to the Greek cause. Finally, frustrated by Spartan inaction, the Athenians express themselves clearly: since the Spartans have abandoned them, they will abandon the Greeks and join the Persians (9.11). Thucydides learned from Herodotus how the ironic clash of high ideals and self-interest works itself out in historical events.³⁶

³⁵ Even the eighty Athenians also besieged in the city did not expect help from Athens (2.78.3 and 3.20.1). After the city's fall, twenty-five were executed (3.68.2).

³⁶ Of course, the poets from Homer on recognized irony in human affairs: the distinction is that Herodotus and Thucydides find it in history, not fiction.

IV. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE TWO HISTORIES

A still more complex example of Thucydides' response can be discovered by comparing how each writer begins his history. Despite radical differences, striking similarities in conception and execution suggest that here, too, Thucydides is reinterpreting Herodotus and building his opening passages according to many criteria used by his predecessor.

The proems

Both historians employ a tripartite preface, combining similar elements. Herodotus, after a prefatory sentence identifying himself and offering an extremely broad statement of his purpose and subject, presents a Persian account, with a Phoenician variant, of the ancient origin of the enmity between Persians and Greeks. He then states his own starting point, and concludes the preface with a statement of his method and his presuppositions, especially the notion that human prosperity is never stable. Like Herodotus, Thucydides begins with a three-part preface, first identifying himself and stating his subject and method, then giving an analytical narrative of the history of military and political power in Greece, from legendary times to the Persian Wars, and finally stating his own aims, methods, and philosophy of history (1.1–23).³⁷

There are many points of comparison in these two prefaces, but three are to me especially important. First, each goes back to the prehistoric period to establish patterns of behaviour which are fundamental to their histories: for Herodotus, the pattern of wrongdoing followed by revenge or repayment, and the violation of continental boundaries; for Thucydides, the acquisition of power and empire through wealth and a navy and their use in a common action involving combined resources.

Second, each offers a sample of his methodology in use of sources. In Herodotus' preface one sees his technique of recording and historicizing traditions, and of comparing diverse traditions (here, Persian, Greek, and Phoenician). In Thucydides' one notes how he gathers material from various sources—Homer, archaeology,

³⁷ On the relations between these proems, see Erbse (1970), Stadter (1981), Dewald (1999), Moles (1993), Bakker (2002).

contemporary peoples—and subjects it to an analysis based on the motivating forces of human nature. In both, the process of gathering information and the critical stance of the historian towards his sources are emphasized.

Third, in both cases, this process moves beyond mere assembling of information to a philosophy of history based on an understanding of the common features of human life as discovered by the investigation: Herodotus speaks of *τὴν ἀνθρωπηϊκὴν . . . εὐδαιμονίην* (1.5.4); Thucydides of *τὸ ἀνθρώπινον* (1.23.4). In both, despite the fact that their histories have a strong element of praise, the conception of human nature is fundamentally pessimistic. Herodotus insists that human prosperity is not stable (1.5). We learn in the course of his history that the greater an individual's prosperity, the greater his fall when his situation inevitably changes. At the end, Persian power has been confined to Asia, and a new power, Athens, is on the rise. Thucydides' philosophy was similar: he establishes the greatness of the combatants' strength at the beginning of the war, but also stresses how much suffering took place in his war (1.23).³⁸ His book traces the rise and decline of Athens. The fate of the Sicilian Expedition looks forward to the total collapse of Athenian power at the end of the war.

Thucydides, in fact, in an important passage of book 2, follows Herodotus in marking the beginning of conflict as the beginning of troubles. The Spartan herald Melesippus, when the Athenians refuse to listen to him while the Spartan troops are in Attica, declaims dramatically, 'This day will be the beginning of great troubles for the Greeks.'³⁹ These words echo those of Herodotus, speaking of the Athenian ships dispatched to aid the Ionian Revolt in 499: 'These ships became a beginning of troubles for Greeks and barbarians.'⁴⁰

³⁸ On the importance of suffering in Thucydides and its relation to the power, cf. Immerwahr (1973); Lateiner (1977a); Connor (1984), index s.v. *pathos*.

³⁹ Thuc. 2.12.3: *ἥδε ἡ ἡμέρα τοῖς Ἕλλησι μεγάλων κακῶν ἄρξει*.

⁴⁰ Hdt. 5.97.3: *αὗται δὲ αἱ νέες ἀρχὴ κακῶν ἐγένοντο Ἕλλησι τε καὶ βαρβάροισι*. Cf. also Hdt. 5.28.1, 30.1; 6.67.3. The words recall two passages from Homer, *Il.* 5.62–4 and 11.604, which mark the beginning of evil, respectively, for the Trojans and for Patroclus. Herodotus' reference to ships echoes Homer's first passage, speaking of Paris' ships, *νῆας . . . ἀρχεκάκους*. Both have the same ominous sense as the second passage, in which Patroclus' response to Achilles' request is termed *κακοῦ . . . ἀρχή*. Of course, Thucydides may have had one or both Homeric passages in mind as well. In all these cases, what began as an exciting and noble action ended in suffering and death.

The fundamental question for the reader must be, not whether Melesippus made this pronouncement or not,⁴¹ but why Thucydides chose to echo Herodotus so closely at a similar point in his narrative. The echo serves to appropriate Herodotus' vision of war for his own history. The decision of the Athenians and Spartans to go to war in 431, like the enthusiasm of the Athenians and Ionians in 499, would be the source of endless grief.⁴²

The greater suffering in his war, caused by its length and the superior preparation of the combatants, explains Thucydides' challenge to Herodotus' interpretation of a significant event, the earthquake that shook Delos. Herodotus saw this earthquake as a sign of 'coming troubles' (τῶν μελλόντων ἔσεσθαι κακῶν), referring both to the Persian Wars and the wars that would follow (6.98). Thucydides instead mentions the earthquake at the beginning of his account and connects it with 'the coming events' (ἐπὶ τοῖς μέλλουσι γενήσεσθαι, 2.8.3), thus claiming it and the sufferings it portended for his own war. Since the Peloponnesian War was greater than the Persian War, Thucydides insists that the portent of the earthquake must be associated with that war.⁴³

In thinking of success and suffering, Thucydides focuses on groups rather than individuals. A distinctive Herodotean echo in Thucydides catches the difference. Solon, in reminding Croesus that his riches are only of relative assistance if good luck is absent, notes that no one human body is self-sufficient: ἀνθρώπου σῶμα ἔν οὐδὲν αὐταρκές ἐστι, just as no country can supply all its own needs, but each one has some thing, and lacks another (1.32.8). Thucydides takes this concept over, but applies it to the citizen body of a polis, not to just one individual. Pericles, in the Funeral Oration (2.41.1), boasts that because of Athens' wealth, culture, and resources, a citizen there is able to render his body self-sufficient: τὸ σῶμα

⁴¹ A. Sommerstein, e.g., in his commentary (1985) to Aristophanes, *Peace* 435, accepts that passage as confirming the factuality of Melesippus' statement. The possible interrelations of poetic, rhetorical, and historical statements are too complex for certainty on this. The literary relationship of the two historians seems more secure.

⁴² This emphasis on suffering is already found in the proems to both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

⁴³ See Stadter (1992), 788–90, for the argument that the same earthquake is meant in both cases. Even if not, the implication for Thucydides' notice is the same.

αὐταρκες.⁴⁴ A wonderful boast, and when taken in connection with the earlier statements that Athens had access to the goods of every land (2.38.2), an apparent rebuttal of Solon's warning to Croesus. Yet only a few pages later, in the description of the plague which ravaged Athens (2.51.3), we discover that no body could resist its effect, or was able to be self-sufficient: *σῶμά τε αὐταρκες ὃν οὐδὲν διεφάνη*. Herodotus and Solon are proven right: for a city, as for individuals, self-sufficiency is not a stable human possession. Thucydides has taken a term from a pivotal passage in Herodotus, and employed it even more forcefully in a new context, applying it to the fortunes of the citizens of a prosperous state.⁴⁵

Narrative beginnings: Corcyra

After their prefaces, the historians chose starting points for their narratives: Croesus' success and defeat for Herodotus (1.6–94), Corcyra's conflict with Corinth for Thucydides (1.24–55). Neither beginning is obvious. Thucydides imitates Herodotus' start from an oblique vantage point, from which the narrative gradually progresses to the major war. After the story of Croesus, Herodotus proceeds through the rise and expansion of Persia, finally reaching Xerxes' attack on Greece in book 7. Thucydides, writing with a tighter focus, squeezes into book 1 all the preliminary material he considers useful: the episodes of Corcyra and Potidaea, the debate at Sparta, a review of the fifty years since the Persian defeat, the meeting of the Peloponnesian League, and the last negotiations (including flash-backs on Cylon, Pausanias, and Themistocles), and Pericles' speech urging war. The war itself then begins with book 2.⁴⁶ In each case the initial episodes address issues fundamental for the history as a whole and set the tone and the parameters of discourse for all that follows in their respective histories.

⁴⁴ Gomme's note ad loc. (1956, 127), that 'τὸ σῶμα is here for *ἐαυτόν*' misses the effect of the distinctive expression. Cf. Macleod (1983), 151; Scanlon (1994); and Rusten (1989), 159, ad loc.

⁴⁵ There is no doubt that the phrase is a conscious echo, although it is possible that both historians echo a contemporary politician such as Pericles. *Αὐτάρκης* occurs only once in Herodotus, and four times in Thucydides (in the other two cases, 1.37.3 and 2.36.4, some of the same implications seem to be present). Cf. now Foster (2010), 203–5.

⁴⁶ The exact point of beginning is disputed: see Rawlings (1981), 18–35, Hornblower (1991), 236–7.

Herodotus' Croesus *logos* is far too complex to analyse, given its numerous famous episodes, including the stories of Gyges, Arion, Solon, Adrastus, the testing of the Delphic oracle, and Croesus on the pyre. Since it is well known, it is sufficient to note that with this introductory *logos* Herodotus establishes several related themes. Among these one can mention first, that human life is subject to change, especially that prosperity often leads to ruin; second, that human understanding is limited and frequently blind to the human situation; third, that an inevitable desire for expansion accompanies prosperity; fourth, the incursion of Asian powers on Greek settlements; and fifth (in an inset pair of *logoi*, 1.59–70), the competition between Sparta and Athens. All of these themes will be essential for comprehension of the rest of his work, and especially of Xerxes' war against Greece.

Thucydides aimed at the same goal—that is, to set out major themes in a vivid and exciting narrative—in his opening segment on Corcyra. However, in following Herodotus' practice he rejects the fictive element so prominent in his work. Moreover, he restricts the accumulation of stories only loosely linked to the main narrative, so that the entire Corcyra segment is narrated linearly, beginning with the appeal of the Epidamnians and concluding with the battle of Sybota, with only minimal temporal distortion.⁴⁷ Rather, he fashions a compelling and rapidly paced narrative of near-contemporary events, which nevertheless is general enough to incorporate themes fundamental to his history: Athens' restless energy, the importance of sea power, the difficulty of predicting the consequences of decisions, and the ever-present tension between what is profitable and what is right.⁴⁸

Like Herodotus, Thucydides begins with a statement of identity, perhaps unexpected by his reader: 'Epidamnus is a city . . .' (1.24.1; cf. Hdt. 1.6.1 'Croesus was Lydian by race').⁴⁹ Significantly, he begins

⁴⁷ Nevertheless, he does accept Herodotus' technique in the structure of book 1 as a whole, inserting the Pentecontaetia and the stories of Kylon, Pausanias, and Themistocles. On the challenging structure of book 1, see most recently Rusten (2010).

⁴⁸ On this first Corcyra episode, cf. Stadter (1983), Crane (1998), and Rusten (2010). Rusten reads the passage with Herodotus 3.48–53 (Periander and the Corcyraean youths) especially in mind.

⁴⁹ There are Homeric parallels for such a bald geographic statement (cf. Hornblower 1991, 67, ad loc.), but Thucydides' usage here to introduce a major episode is close to Herodotus, as Dionysius of Halicarnassus noted (*De comp. verb.* 4).

not with a person, but a polis. In fact, throughout the Corcyraean episode, no discrete action is connected with any individual.⁵⁰ Only groups (Epidamnians, Corcyraeans, Corinthians, Athenians) act, make the two speeches, and engage in the brief dialogue after the battle of Sybota. The difference from Herodotus' opening sequence could not be more marked. Although Thucydides can and does study the speeches and actions of leading individuals, this introductory episode shifts the focus of history from the individual to the group and reveals truths of human behaviour through communal action.

Despite their marked differences in narrative style, the one discursive, uniting through the narrator's voice loosely connected stories, often of questionable historicity, the other driven forward by an analytic, authoritative narrator, Thucydides imitates Herodotus, who himself followed epic precedent, in offering authorial comments on the motivation of historical actors.⁵¹ In Herodotus' Gyges story, typically, the narrator notes that Candaules is governed by emotion: 'he was enamoured of his wife, and in his love he thought she was the most beautiful of all women' (1.8.1). Later, the narrator explains that when Croesus inquired whom Solon has seen most prosperous of all men, he hoped to be that man, or at least second happiest (Hdt. 1.30.3, 31.1). Further on, the reader is told that Croesus attacked Cyrus, 'misunderstanding the oracle and hoping to defeat Cyrus and the Persian forces' (1.71.1). Thucydides in his narrator's voice observes that the Corinthians in helping Epidamnus were motivated not only by justice, in that they too were founders of that city, but also by hate and by offended honour, since the Corcyraeans never gave them the respect they deserved as founders of Corcyra (1.25.3–4). Passions that are innate in human nature thus lead the Corinthians to war.⁵² Again, when the Athenians were considering a pact with Corcyra, the narrator notes that they thought that 'the war

⁵⁰ The single exception: Phalios of Corinth, founder of Epidamnus (24.1). Other individuals named are the three Corinthian commanders at Leukimme (1.29.2, including Aristeus, who becomes important at Potidaea); the three commanders of the initial Athenian force (1.45.2) and of the relief force (1.51.4); and the leading commander of the Corinthians and the three Corcyraean commanders at Sybota (1.46.2, 47.1). However, no specific action is ascribed to any of the commanders.

⁵¹ Cf. de Jong (2004), 105–6. On Herodotean and Thucydidean narrators, cf. Gribble (1998), Dewald (1999), de Jong (2004), Rood (2004). On motivation in Herodotus, see Baragwanath (2008). On Herodotus' voice, cf. also Fowler (1996).

⁵² Cf. Rusten (2010). The Corcyraean response immediately moves from anger (*ἐχάλεπαινον*) to action, Thuc. 1.26.3.

with the Peloponnesians was coming in any case' and that Corcyra's ships would be useful for that war (1.44.2). The narrator makes clear that Athenian expectations of the future govern the present, and in fact make the foreseen future inevitable. Similarly, after the appearance of the second Athenian squadron which ended the battle of Sybota, the narrator explains that the Corinthians were worried about how to get away back to Corinth and whether the Athenians considered that they had broken the treaty (1.52.2–3), intimating that the outbreak of war depended on the perceptions of the two sides. These authorial interventions address two central concerns of Thucydides regarding the problems human nature poses in the political realm: that decisions are made by emotion, not reason, and that it is impossible to control events according to one's expectations.

In addition to these interventions, the two extraordinary speeches that set before the Athenians the claims of Corcyra and Corinth explore a rich blend of themes: the nature of justice and its conflict with expediency in foreign policy,⁵³ the importance of naval power, and the maintenance of spheres of influence. The dense style of these speeches is distant from the charm of Herodotus' story of Gyges or the dialogue between Solon and Croesus on looking to the end, but they perform the same historiographic function of exploring concepts fundamental to the historian's understanding of humans acting in history. Once more we find Thucydides modifying the means but keeping the same purpose as his elder contemporary.

A similar process is at work when Thucydides, like Herodotus, uses dramatic representation to reveal the implications of action. The account of the battle of Sybota (1.49–54) shows us Thucydides at his most vivid. He rapidly and vigorously paints a series of scenes: first the struggling Corinthian and Corcyraean ships, locked in a land battle at sea; then the ten Athenian ships, which at first hang back, following their instructions to refrain from breaking the treaty, but slowly are drawn by necessity step by step to engage the Corinthian ships (1.49.7). We suffer as the Corinthian left drive back and slaughter the Corcyraeans, who finally regroup with the Athenians for a last desperate defence of their island—when suddenly the Corinthians back water (1.50.5)! They have discerned twenty additional ships arriving, the ships sent from Athens to aid the ten already present. The reader feels with the combatants the shock and

⁵³ Cf. Pelling, Ch. 11 in this volume.

surprise of their arrival, since Thucydides had never mentioned their dispatch from Athens.⁵⁴ This surprise turn, a storyteller's technique, can be found in Homer and is common in Herodotus. In the Croesus *logos* one notes the unanticipated words of Candaules' wife, the marvellous appearance of the dolphin that saved Arion, the suicide of Adrastus, or the surprising shout of Croesus' mute son that saved his father's life (1.11.2–3, 24.6, 43.3, 85.4). In both authors, the surprise serves to remind us of the fragility of human control over events. The outcome of an action may depend on something fortuitous, beyond human foresight or direction, or as Herodotus would say, on the divine. In this case an unanticipated decision taken far away in Athens by chance saves the day at Sybota. The battle narrative also reveals, through the gradual involvement of the Athenian ships, how unfolding events can lead men to act contrary to their own decisions and their best interests. The Athenian entry into battle reflects in miniature the escalation of hostilities documented in the larger Corcyraean narrative, and establishes a pattern for the growing confrontation between Athens and Sparta.

Thucydides generally prefers speeches to present the reasoning of the actors in his history over the freer, briefer dialogues which Herodotus favours. However, Thucydides does take advantage of dialogue at especially significant or pathetic moments. The great case, of course, is the Melian Dialogue, a pungent debate on power, expediency, and morality placed just before Athens' great expedition—and defeat. The brief dialogue between the Ambraciote herald and an anonymous Athenian or Amphilochian highlights the slaughter of Ambraciots at Idomene, 'the greatest disaster that happened to any one Greek city in the same number of days during the war' (3.113).⁵⁵ In the Corcyra episode, immediately after the battle of Sybota the exchange between the Corinthians and the Athenians poses in a nutshell the pivotal question of the *Kerkyraika*: did the Athenians break the peace treaty with the Peloponnesians? The Corinthians say yes: 'You do wrong, Athenians, to initiate war and break the treaty. . . . Kill us therefore as enemies.' The Athenians reject the charge: 'We are not initiating war, nor are we breaking the treaty. . . . Go freely where you will, so long as you don't sail against

⁵⁴ On the difficulty this has caused commentators see Hornblower (1994), 140–3.

⁵⁵ Cf. Lateiner (1977b). Cf. also 4.40.2, 4.97–9, and 8.92.9–11, dialogues reported in indirect discourse.

Corcyra' (1.53). The reader is left to decide who has the more just case, if either side is just. We may reflect that the Athenians at Sybota find their position similar to that of Herodotus' Croesus. Croesus, having been warned by a dream, did everything he could to save his son Atys. Nevertheless Atys was killed, struck by a spear thrown by Adrastus, the very man whom Croesus had sent to protect him. In attempting to defend his son, he had killed him. In his final dialogue with Adrastus, Croesus comes to realize that he could not shield his son from his fate and absolves Adrastus: 'You are not to blame for this misfortune, . . . but some god' (Hdt. 1.45.2). Likewise the Athenians attempted to take every precaution to avoid breaking the treaty, but 'necessity' (*ἀνάγκη*) drove the Athenians and the Corinthians to engage with each other.⁵⁶ The Corinthians then considered the Athenian participation in the battle a cause for war. The dialogue encapsulates the Athenians' vain attempt to exercise their power but avoid war.⁵⁷

A final common feature of these opening chapters is the sense of anticipation that both authors create in their audience. Stories such as those used by Herodotus naturally force the audience to look to the future by placing the protagonist in a quandary. Candaules urges Gyges to see his queen naked: what will be the result? Arion is threatened by pirates: what will he do? Croesus plans to attack Cyrus: can he succeed? But other devices, less obvious, invite listeners to project themselves forward in the narrative, to consider possible outcomes. The whole focus of Solon's dialogue with Croesus is 'look to the end'. The listener naturally speculates on where the narrative will take him.⁵⁸ Moreover, Croesus' obsession with oracles reveals a desire to know, to foresee in some way, and thus to control the outcome of events. Croesus attacks Cyrus because he is confident that he knows the result of his actions. His delusion is the greater because of his erroneous anticipation. The audience tries to anticipate with Croesus the outcome of his projects, and in the process learns to recognize human blindness and appreciate prudent foresight.

⁵⁶ Cf. Thuc. 1.49.7: ἀλλὰ ξυνέπεσεν ἐς τοῦτο ἀνάγκης ὥστε ἐπιχειρήσαι ἀλλήλοις τοὺς Κορινθίους καὶ Ἀθηναίους.

⁵⁷ In a somewhat similar fashion, Croesus attempted to be absolutely secure before campaigning against Cyrus, first by testing the oracles and then by consulting them on his expedition. Nevertheless, his confidence in his own prosperity and control over circumstances deceived him, and he was defeated, as happened with the Athenians.

⁵⁸ On the 'way of the narrative', cf. Lang (1984), 1–6.

Thucydides shared Herodotus' insistence that the reader learn to look to the end, to anticipate and understand the future by observing the past with a clear eye. Already in his preface, Thucydides makes explicit the implied didacticism of Herodotus when he expresses his hope that his narrative will be useful for those who wish to understand future events (1.22.4). The *Kerkyraïka* creates the same sense of expectation in the reader as the Croesus *logos*, in part through the gradual and apparently inevitable escalation of the conflict, but especially in the two speeches of the Corcyraeans and the Corinthians. As usually in Thucydides, these speeches focus our attention on the future, on the possible outcomes of decisions, and offer guides for action. The Corcyraeans assert that an Athenian alliance will bring the Athenians their gratitude and, most importantly, their navy, and deny that the existing treaty will be broken; the Corinthians claim that the Athenians will violate the treaty and precipitate war.⁵⁹ The whole discussion of profit and justice, of *τὸ συμφέρον* and *τὸ δίκαιον*, points towards the future, offering a more specific and analytic statement of Solon's advice to look to the end. The Athenian decision for a defensive alliance is also based on an evaluation of future possibilities, including the expectation of a future war and the hope that the two parties, Corcyra and Corinth, would mutually weaken each other (1.44).⁶⁰ Herodotus centres his treatment on a single individual, Croesus, whereas Thucydides concentrates on the cities as decision-making entities. At the same time Thucydides' narrative, like Herodotus' Croesus *logos*, engages the reader in an act of anticipation and foresight: how can Athens avoid breaking the treaty? Will it in fact do so? And where will these events lead? Thucydides, while changing the means of expression and the elements at issue, still maintains the focus on the problems of foresight, historical action, and the human situation that are central to Herodotus.

⁵⁹ Corcyraeans: Thuc. 1.33.1, 35.1, 36.3; Corinthians: Thuc. 1.40.3.

⁶⁰ On the Athenian decision at this time, cf. Stadter (1983) and Rusten (2010).

V. CONCLUSION

Thucydides, like Herodotus, resolved to write a work that would bring out the role of human nature in historical events. He intended, however, to express himself even more clearly and forcefully than the Halicarnassian, and in a manner more appropriate for a citizen of an imperial city, one who knew power at first hand. In interpreting Herodotus, Thucydides rethought his predecessor's modes of presentation, subject, and themes. He adopted Herodotus' treatment of war by campaign seasons for his whole narrative. Significant echoes from Herodotus gave focus and power to his narrative. While continuing and expanding the theme of suffering, he gave more importance to the polis, seen as a unit and a historical actor. Thucydides took over and further developed Herodotus' narrative techniques, including authoritative statements by the narrator, speeches, vivid description, and dialogue. Like Herodotus, Thucydides recounts the past as an invitation to look to the future. Human blindness towards what will come is inevitable, he suggests, but perhaps a clear understanding of the past will throw light on future events. Through his response to the *Histories* of Herodotus, a response which in the end amounted to a whole new kind of historical narrative, he succeeded in rendering his *History* an everlasting possession.

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Indirect Discourse in Herodotus and Thucydides*

Carlo Scardino

In modern times the representation of historical research is ideally founded on authentic documentation, and requires no fictional elements: speeches are either cited verbatim in *oratio recta*, or their sense is summarized in *oratio obliqua*. By contrast, ancient historiography employs many narrative techniques and patterns derived from epic and drama in its representation of events. In this context, speeches and conversations guide reception and possess important explanatory functions.

While the scholarship of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries endeavoured mainly to establish the authenticity of the direct speeches in Thucydides—Herodotus was hardly taken seriously or analysed from this perspective—newer works seek to explain the phenomenon of the speeches in terms of insights won from narratological and reader response theories.¹ The direct speeches have received the lion's share of the scholarly attention devoted to this re-examination, while the indirect speeches have frequently been neglected.²

* I am grateful to Edith Foster for translating my paper into English.

¹ Cf. the overview of recent scholarship in Scardino (2007), 3–26.

² For Herodotus, Heni (1977), 160 ff. discerned three main functions of indirect speech: (1) The indispensable, but for the following conversation thematically irrelevant, introductory question. (2) Short repetition of material already known to the reader, in order to inform an as yet uninformed character. (3) Statements doomed to fail, or passionate statements. For Pelling (2006), 104 '*oratio recta* tends to direct more attention to how people are talking, *oratio obliqua* to the substance of what they say'. Jebb (1880), 270 argued that the indirect speeches in Thucydides contained

The aim of this chapter is to examine the phenomenon of indirect speeches on the basis of a number of examples from Herodotus and Thucydides, to determine their form and function in each work, and to arrive at a description of their commonalities to and differences from *oratio recta*. The unspoken focalization that in Herodotus and Thucydides most often serves indirectly to represent short analyses of a situation or concrete plans of action in terms of the perceptions and unspoken thoughts of characters involved in the action will not be analysed.³ *Oratio obliqua* will also not be treated as a narrative expression of sources external to the text.⁴

The nature of the indirect speeches is best understood through reference to the narratological model developed for the analysis of modern novels and applied to ancient texts:⁵ this model distinguishes different levels in a text, which arise through the combination of the narratorial function (who is speaking?) and focalization (who sees/perceives/speaks, etc? = *point of view*); depending on the complexity of the story, a text might theoretically display a large number of levels. Not only a change in the narrator, but also a change of focalization allow figures involved in the events (both individuals

material from which Thucydides in other passages created direct speeches, but that abstract formulae in these speeches were Thucydidean additions. For Montgomery (1965), 73, they are ‘a kind of raw material for speeches, which Thucydides for compositional reasons did not work out . . . perhaps the events were not so important that a detailed motivation was necessary’. Similar are Westlake (1973), 104, and Crane (1996), 68. Thoroughly argued in Hornblower (1996), 81 ff. and (2008), 32 ff.

³ Cf. Montgomery (1965), Schneider (1974), and Scardino (2007).

⁴ In particular, Herodotus often allows one of his sources to speak in *oratio obliqua*, and through this implicitly or explicitly distances himself from the particular source. In his account in 1.1–5 about the cause of the conflict he allows focalization to the Persian λόγιοι (λέγουσι 1.1.1, 1.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.3) but is himself always present through explanatory authorial parentheses. Cf. Gould (1989), 50: ‘The technique of narrative in indirect speech is one Herodotus uses on a number of occasions to distance himself as storyteller from a particular section of his narrative.’ While in Herodotus the form λέγουσι appears 214 times, and λέγεται 111 times, Thucydides has λέγουσι only 4 times, and λέγεται 21 times. Thucydides only seldom allows those who are parts of the story to become the storytellers. At 1.138.4 he ascribes a variant story of Themistocles’ death to a different source (λέγουσι δέ τινες); at 2.5.6 he notes the discrepancy between the versions of the Thebans and the Plataeans; at 2.102.5 ff. during a mythological excursus he displays his distance to his source; in the same way, the formula ὡς λέγεται shows mistrust of a source (for instance, the oracle at Delphi 1.118.3).

⁵ The narratological model developed by Bal (1997; with further literature), and applied by de Jong (1987) to the *Iliad*, but also to Herodotus (de Jong 1999, 2001) serves as a foundation, cf. Scardino (2007), 37 ff.

Table 4.1

Level of Narration	Narrator	Focalization
1. Simple Narrator Text	External Narrator = Author	External Narrator
2. Complex Narrator Text	External Narrator = Author	Character
3. Character Text (<i>oratio recta</i>)	Character	Character

and groups) to speak in addition to the external narrator, who in historical works is identical with the author. In respect to ancient historical writing—as in respect to epic—we can employ the system shown in Table 4.1.

While in simple narrator text the external narrator, i.e. the historian, is also the focalizer, and guides reception, in character text the author steps back and turns over to a figure speaking in *oratio recta* both the narratorial function and also focalization. By contrast, the indirect speeches (*oratio obliqua*) are hybrid. Like all parts of the narrative in which the external narrator indirectly reports on the one hand non-verbal sensual perceptions, thoughts, and memories, or on the other hand the spoken words of the characters involved in the action, the indirect speeches belong to complex narrator text. In this type of narrative the narrator retains his narratorial functions, but transfers the focalization to a character involved in the action.

Indirect speeches are expressed differently in different languages. In Greek, they are introduced with a short formula (e.g. a verb of speaking),⁶ that directs us to the speech act, and are embedded hypotactically in the main construction ($\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ / $\delta\tilde{\tau}\iota$ with a subordinate clause or an infinitive construction),⁷ whereby an alteration of the grammatical person of the speaker (third, instead of first or second

⁶ The discourse called in modern literary parlance ‘free indirect discourse’, which represents the opinion of a character without an introductory *verbum dicendi* and without a subordinating conjunction, for example, ‘If he were going to do that, he would have to suffer the consequences’ (scil. he thought), also belongs to complex narrator text, since focalization is implicitly surrendered to another character. On this stylistic technique, applied already in antiquity (cf. Laird 1999, 27), but used consciously only since the 19th cent., cf. in general Coulmas (1986), 7 ff. and Mizzau (1999), 190, with further literature.

⁷ On the phenomenon of ‘intrusive oblique infinitives’ in Herodotus, cf. also Cooper (1974), 23 ff. He argues that such infinitives ‘may intrude themselves in subordinate clauses in infinitival *oratio obliqua* and after $\delta\tilde{\tau}\iota$ and/or $\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ after verbs of speaking or thinking in Herodotus as well as in Attic authors. When they do so intrude, they serve the purpose of allowing the reporter to distance himself from responsibility for the speech of the speaker reported’ (1974: 76).

person) and sometimes of the mood of the verb (e.g. optative in secondary sequence), but not usually of the tense of the verb, takes place.⁸ Indirect speech is therefore 'a versatile mode of speech reporting ranging from faithfully adapting the linguistic form of the reported utterance to the deictic center of the report situation to a summarizing paraphrase of an utterance irrespective of its linguistic form', in which 'the speaker can indicate in various ways that he intends his report to be faithful to the form of the reported utterance, in spite of its being phrased in indirect speech'.⁹

While *oratio recta* creates an impression of directness, authenticity,¹⁰ dramatic vividness,¹¹ and a greater distance from the narrator, in *oratio obliqua* the narrator remains in continuous presence as a more or less reliable agent of transmission, who can influence the reception of the speech through his choice of words¹² and parenthetical remarks. With these devices he signals his distance from the original utterance.¹³ In *oratio recta* 'the reporter [thus] steps back behind the characters whose words he purports to report'; in *oratio obliqua* he reports the speech 'from his point of view'¹⁴ and through his choice of the verb of speaking that introduces the

⁸ Cf. Kühner (1890–1904), ii. 543: 'Der Erzähler berichtet in abhängiger Rede die Worte oder Gedanken einer Person von deren Standpunkt aus, indem er sich in die Zeit und die Situation versetzt, in der die berichteten Äußerungen gesprochen wurden.'

⁹ Coulmas (1986), 5 ff.

¹⁰ One should keep in mind that in literary *oratio recta* elements of actual verbal communication such as dialectical expressions, interruptions, overlapping speakers, and a variety of other phatic elements are absent, and 'il non verbale (mimica, atteggiamenti, intonazioni) è sostituito in genere da commenti, chiose, le quali servono anche a chiarire le intenzioni comunicative': Mizzau (1999), 192.

¹¹ Li (1986), 40: 'Since direct speech requires the reporter-speaker to act out the role of the reported speaker, it is a natural vehicle for vivid and dramatic presentation.'

¹² Lanser (1981), 188: 'The language is largely the narrator's, but there may be some infiltration of the narrator's speech by the character's word; the thoughts and feelings presented are the character's, but they are filtered through the narrator's consciousness.'

¹³ Coulmas (1986), 2: 'The former evokes the original speech situation and conveys, or claims to convey, the exact words of the original speaker in direct discourse, while the latter adapts the reported utterance to the speech situation of the report in indirect discourse.' Laird (1999), 101: 'The dramatic facility of the direct modes tends to give most prominence to a speaker. The indirect modes, on the other hand, have the usual effect of distancing the audience from whatever characters may have said, whilst rendering at least a part of it.'

¹⁴ Coulmas (1986), 2.

indirect speech, provides further, sometimes non-verbal, information relevant to understanding what follows (e.g. 'he shouted' or 'he said it laughing or crying' instead of the neutral expression 'he said'). By contrast to the directness of *oratio recta*, interjections, vocative address, and imperatives are either impossible to express, or can only be expressed through periphrases outside of the *oratio obliqua*.¹⁵

Laird suggests an interesting starting point that respects the relevant differences on the formal level, but rejects the dichotomy, characteristic of narratological analysis, between the narratorial function ('who speaks') and focalization ('who sees'). He emphasizes that if we consider both direct and indirect discourse as the intrusion of a speaker into the narration they occupy the same place,¹⁶ since in his opinion a *verbum declarandi vel dicendi* clearly separates indirect discourse (as well as direct discourse) from the narrator text, and 'whatever message it governs is *not* the narrator's property'.¹⁷ He argues that 'instances of presented speech (whether direct, indirect, or free indirect) are constructions created by the subjection of utterances to the constraints of narrative' and that these, like the narrative of events, are 'constructions of the historical narrator'.¹⁸

I. AUTHORIAL INTRODUCTORY AND CLOSING FORMULAE

In the same way as for *oratio recta*, introductory and closing formulae usually surround *oratio obliqua* in Herodotus and Thucydides. These formulae vary greatly in their length and some are syntactically integrated to the speech itself, whereas authorial statements are clearly separated from speeches in *oratio recta*.

¹⁵ It is not always possible to transform a speech in *oratio recta* into a speech in *oratio obliqua* and v.v. Cf. Coulmas (1986), 2 ff.

¹⁶ Laird (1999), 139: 'Direct and indirect discourse are to be understood here, not in terms of reproduction or representation, but as the maximum possible presence of an alien speaker in a monologic utterance.'

¹⁷ Laird (1999), 140. The formal differentiation between direct and indirect discourse 'has led to an overestimation of the semantic and pragmatic differences between the two modes. The semantic and pragmatic differences are relevant in some fields (in distinguishing fiction from drama for instance). But for the study of something like historical narrative, these differences are largely significant only as a matter of style and syntax' (ibid.).

¹⁸ Laird (1999), 150.

At a minimum, reference to the speaker and the fact of speaking before, during, or after the speech can be expressed through a finite or participial verb form, and sometimes also through naming the speaker.¹⁹

Beside neutral *verba dicendi* (φάναι²⁰ and λέγειν,²¹ and also ἀποκρίνεσθαι²²) and *verba declarandi* (for instance: φράζειν ‘to tell or declare’;²³ ἀγγέλλειν ‘to announce’;²⁴ δηλοῦν ‘to demonstrate’;²⁵ (γνώμην) ἀποφαίνεσθαι or ἀποδείκνυσθαι ‘to provide one’s opinion’;²⁶ κηρύσσειν ‘to herald’;²⁷ γνώμη ἦν ‘it was the opinion’²⁸), one also occasionally finds more emphatic verbs, which express the manner in which the speech act unfolds, the occasion for the speech, the emotions or intentions of the speaker, or the result of the speech, for instance: εὔχεσθαι ‘to pray’;²⁹ βοᾶν ‘to clamour’;³⁰ ἐφνυβρίζειν ‘to insult’;³¹ ἐπιμαρτύρεσθαι ‘to claim’;³² θαρσύνειν ‘to encourage’;³³ ἐπιβοᾶν ‘to call upon’;³⁴ κατηγορεῖν ‘to accuse’;³⁵ κελεύειν ‘to command’;³⁶ παραινέειν ‘to urge’;³⁷ and more complex constructions, such as: προῖσχεσθαι λόγον ‘to put forward as a reason (or pretext)’;³⁸ ἅκων εἶπεν ‘he spoke against his will’;³⁹ λέγοντες δι’ ἀγγέλων ‘saying it through messengers’;⁴⁰ συνεβούλευον ... σημαίνοντες ‘they advised ... by showing’;⁴¹ φθόνῳ καταμαργέων ἐνείκεε ... προφέρων ‘consumed with envy, he quarrelled ...

¹⁹ Sometimes it is necessary mentally to supply a *verbum dicendi*, esp. when verbs of speaking are available in previous sentences. At Hdt. 9.122.3, for example, Cyrus’ *gnome* is introduced without a verb, but in the previous sentence we have παραίνεε κελεύων, which is still active in sentence 3, so that it is unnecessary to speak, in this case, of ‘free indirect discourse’.

²⁰ Hdt. 1.112.1, 4.84.1, 4.142, 7.3.3, 7.136.2, 7.143.1, 7.147.1, 8.36.1, 9.53.2, 9.55.2; Thuc. 1.90.2.5, 1.91.7, 4.27.3, 4.28.2.4, 4.98.1, 6.25.1, 6.44.3, 6.48.1, 6.49.1.4, 6.64.3, 6.72.4, 7.5.3, 7.21.4, 7.47.4, 7.48.4.5.6, 7.49.2.3, 8.27.1, 8.45.5 where ἔφη is often embedded in the speech.

²¹ Hdt. 4.137.2, 7.142.1, 8.19.1, 8.49.2 (ἐπιλέγειν), 8.108.2, 9.90.2; Thuc. 1.91.4, 2.13.9, 2.73.1, 4.22.2, 4.97.2, 4.114.2, 4.120.3, 6.6.2, 6.25.2, 6.29.3, 6.50.4, nominal: τὸν λόγον ποιούμενοι Hdt. 4.142 and λόγους ποιείσθαι Thuc. 6.44.3.

²² Thuc. 1.90.3, 2.72.2, 2.74.1, 4.21.3, 4.99.1.

²³ Hdt. 7.168.1; Thuc. 7.73.3.

²⁴ Thuc. 7.25.9.

²⁵ Thuc. 1.90.2, 7.25.9.

²⁶ Hdt. 8.49.1, 8.108.2; ἀποφαίνειν Thuc. 2.13.5, 8.45.5.

²⁷ Thuc. 6.50.4.

²⁸ Hdt. 4.132.1, 4.137.1 and 3; Thuc. 6.47.1; plural Hdt. 9.41.1.

²⁹ Hdt. 7.54.2, 7.143.1.

³⁰ Thuc. 6.28.2.

³¹ Thuc. 6.63.3.

³² Thuc. 6.29.2.

³³ Hdt. 2.141.3; Thuc. 2.13.6, 4.115.1, 6.72.2.

³⁴ Thuc. 7.70.7.

³⁵ Thuc. 1.91.1.

³⁶ Hdt. 8.108.4; Thuc. 1.91.3, 2.13.3, 4.28.1, 4.98.8, 4.114.5, 8.27.4, 8.46.4.

³⁷ Thuc. 4.27.4, 8.46.1.

³⁸ Hdt. 8.111.2.

³⁹ Thuc. 6.25.2.

⁴⁰ Hdt. 7.203.1.

⁴¹ Hdt. 7.173.3; 7.3.2 συνεβούλευε λέγειν; συμβουλεύειν alone 7.120.1.

through chastising';⁴² *ξυνανέπειθε* ... *λέγων* 'he tried to convince them ... saying';⁴³ *ἐσσηγείται* ... *λέγων* 'he suggests ... saying';⁴⁴ *ῥσπαιρε* ... *φάμενος* 'he struggled/gasped ... saying'.⁴⁵ Indirect questions are introduced with *εἶρεσθαι* or *ἐρωτᾶν*.⁴⁶

Further information and authorial comments on the manner and success of the speeches, or on the speaker himself, can be placed before or after the speech. Themistocles, for instance, is introduced as a man who has risen from a low station (*ἦν δὲ τῶν τις Ἀθηναίων ἀνήρ*), Artabazus as a respected Persian (9.41.1), while Hermocrates (Thuc. 6.72.1) is described as a man who distinguished himself through intelligence (*ξύνεσις*), experience (*ἐμπειρία*), and courage (*ἀνδρεία*). Demaratus' route to Darius' court is explained (Hdt. 7.3.2); at the end of his speech (7.3.4) Herodotus confirms that his argument was convincing, but in an ironic authorial remark adds the information that Xerxes would have become king even without Demaratus' advice, since his mother Atossa held all the power. Success is confirmed by the author at the end of Eurybiades' speech (Hdt. 8.108.4) and Hermocrates' speech (Thuc. 6.73.1).

The biases and intentions of speakers whose speeches are recorded in indirect discourse are often provided through complex focalization. A general analysis of the situation after the victory at the battle of Salamis (8.108.1) prepares the reader for the vows of Themistocles and Eurybiades. The narrator explains Pericles' motivations (fear that Archidamus, on account of the existing guest friendship, or out of calculation, might spare his land) before he speaks (Thuc. 2.13.1). It is interesting that in the negotiation between Cleon and Nicias (4.27 f.), the alternation of mute focalization, through which the motives of the speakers and the reactions of the audience are displayed (28.5), operates together with the alternation of the opinions expressed, as well as authorial comments (28.3 and 5). Nicias' analysis of the situation at Syracuse and his intention appear (7.48) as an unspoken focalization in which his actual thoughts are named and separated from what he says in his indirect speech (*τῷ δ' ἐμφανεῖ τότε λόγῳ*); after the speech the author confirms his assessment of the situation (*αἰσθόμενος τὰ ἐν ταῖς Συρακούσαις ἀκριβῶς* 7.49.1) but not the usefulness of his policy, and through

⁴² Hdt. 8.125.1.⁴³ Thuc. 7.21.3.⁴⁴ Thuc. 7.73.1.⁴⁵ Hdt. 8.5.1.⁴⁶ Hdt. 1.111.2, 7.27.3, 7.147.3, 7.209.5, 8.65.2; Thuc. 1.90.5, 3.113.3; similarly Hdt. 4.97.2 *πυνθάνεσθαι*.

this mechanism influences our reception of the speech. In this same way Thucydides provides both before Alcibiades' speech (8.45.1) and comprehensively afterwards (8.46.5–47.1), partly authorial and partly as secondary focalization, an account of Alcibiades' motivations and Tissaphernes' reaction.

The external narrator can interrupt the speeches with the repetition of *verba dicendi* and short interruptions. Explanatory parentheses sometimes provide important additional information, and at other times confirm or deny the truth of a statement; the partitioning of a speech in this way marks a distancing from the reported speech; however, it also gives individual statements more weight.⁴⁷ For instance, in Demaratus' speech (Hdt. 7.3.3) the narrator uses an embedded formula *ἔφη ὁ Δημάργτος ὑποτιθέμενος* ('Demaratus said, suggesting . . .') to emphasize the decisive argument. A short authorial parenthesis (*ὅπερ καὶ ἦν*) confirms Phrynichus' statement (Thuc. 8.48.4). In the Periclean speech at 2.13 mentioned above, the narrator interrupts Pericles' thoughts and shows a continuous presence, not only through *verba dicendi* (2.13.2 *παρήγει*, 3 *θαρσεῖν τε ἐκέλευε*, 5 *προσετίθει*, *ἀπέφαινε*, and *ἔφη*, 6 *ἐθάρσυνεν*, 8 *ἀπέφαινε*, 9 *ἔλεγε*) that emphasize the explanatory and hortatory function of the speech, but also through explanatory authorial parentheses (13.3, 7, and 9, each time introduced with *γάρ*) that provide additional information and confirmation (as at 2.13.9). In the centre of the speech, Pericles enumerates Athens' monetary resources (2.13.3–6); the verbs *θαρσεῖν* . . . *ἐθάρσυνεν* frame and emphasize his statements, but also signal authorial distance (or irony?).⁴⁸

⁴⁷ e.g. Hdt. 7.3.3 and Thuc. 1.91.7, 2.13.9, 6.49.4, 7.48.3 ff.

⁴⁸ Cf. Foster (2010), 163: 'Thucydides inserts a frame around the central section of the speech (2.13.3–6) . . . It opens by disclosing to the reader Pericles' rhetorical purpose, namely to give the people courage with money, and closes by restating this purpose.' Pericles' account of Athens' monetary resources is climactic, and comprehends income, tribute, reserves, and the gold in Athens' temples, even sacred statues. Pericles appears to be a practitioner of realpolitik, however, as Foster (2010), 171 argues: 'Thucydides' closing remark: "And so, in this way he gave them courage with money . . ." may strike the reader as ironic or even sarcastic. Pericles' way of giving the Athenians courage anticipates melting down religious and cultural artefacts in order to fund the war. His final suggestion was to strip the gold from the statue of Athena, should the war cause desperate financial need, so that his argument ends by constructing both the Athenians and their goddess as destitute because of the war . . . In repeating that Pericles "gave the people courage with money in this way" Thucydides ironizes Pericles' strategy.'

It is often difficult to establish whether the external narrator-focalizer or a character has the focalizing function, not only in respect to the use of epithets, adjectives, or particles, but even for the parentheses. The explanatory gloss after Amompharetus' speech (Hdt. 9.55.2) *ξείνους λέγων τοὺς βαρβάρους* may be a later interpolation that takes up Herodotus' explanation of 9.11.2.⁴⁹

II. THE TYPES OF INDIRECT SPEECH AND THEIR DRAMATIC FUNCTION

When providing accounts of short conversations in *oratio recta* Herodotus often represents the necessary introductory question (which is not necessarily relevant to what follows) in *oratio obliqua*: Coës' short indirect question (4.97) introduces his speech in *oratio recta*.⁵⁰ Likewise, Xerxes' indirect question to the captain at 8.118.2 starts off the short conversation between the two. In the conversation between the herdsman and his wife (Hdt. 1.111–13), the short introductory question of the herdsman's wife is in *oratio obliqua*, while the husband's answer (his account of events 1.111.2–5) is in *oratio recta*, like the speech in which the wife explains her ruse (1.112.2–3), while the unsuccessful speech of the husband, in which he declares that he cannot accomplish his wife's request (1.112.1), is once again in *oratio obliqua*.

Dicaeus' report in *oratio obliqua* and Demaratus' indirect question (8.65) introduce their conversation in *oratio recta*.⁵¹ Thucydides does not make use of the introductory question in *oratio obliqua*, with one exception, namely in the short dramatic speech between a herald and an Ambracian in *oratio recta*, which is introduced with an indirect

⁴⁹ Likewise, in the parenthesis *χρηστὰ γὰρ ἐδόκεον συμβουλεύειν* (Hdt. 7.173.3) it is not completely clear whether the adjective *χρηστά* belongs to authorial focalization or to secondary focalizers, the Greeks who are here the grammatical subject. Cf. also Hornblower (1996), 91 ad loc. Thuc. 4.99.

⁵⁰ Cf. Xerxes' introductory question in his conversation with Pythius at 7.27 ff., cf. also 7.130.1, 7.147.3, and 7.209.5.

⁵¹ By contrast, and especially for longer conversations, the introductory question is reproduced directly in order to create a livelier and more dramatic scene: Artabanus' introductory question at 7.45 and Xerxes' introductory question at 7.101 stand in *oratio recta*; cf. 7.157 and 8.101.

question and a short answer in *oratio obliqua* (3.113.3). At 1.90.5 both the Spartans' question and Themistocles' short answer are recorded in indirect speech. In the case of the negotiations between the Plataean emissaries and Archidamus (2.72–4), the emissaries' two short answers to Archidamus, as well as the account they give to their own citizens, are in *oratio obliqua* (2.72.2, 73.1, and 74.1), while the longer speeches are in *oratio recta*.

Herodotus often prepares a decisive moment with an indirectly reported statement: Adeimantus' refusal to accept a bribe (and therefore to stay at Artemisium) in *oratio obliqua* precedes Themistocles' offer of a bribe in *oratio recta* (8.5.2); again, in his dispute with the envious Nicodemus, whose accusation stands in *oratio obliqua*, Themistocles answers (8.125) with a pointed statement in *oratio recta*.

Speeches and exhortations also stand in *oratio obliqua*. In these the historians record, on the one hand, less important themes or unsuccessful initiatives. For instance, the bon mot of the Abderite who advises his people to thank the gods that it was not Xerxes' habit to eat twice a day (Hdt. 7.120.1), Xerxes' musings (7.147.1) about sparing the Greek spies, Themistocles' unsuccessful plan to incite the Ionians to defect (8.19.1), and Apollo's announcement to the Delphians (8.36.1) that he could protect himself, belong in this category. In Thucydides, an embassy sent from the Athenian ships to the Syracusans (Thuc. 6.50.4) names the official, but as we know from the author (6.6.1), only partly truthful motives for the expedition. Some chapters later, the Syracusan cavalry's contemptuous insults (6.63.3) are represented with a rhetorically effective, sarcastic wordplay (ξυνοικήσοντες - κατοικιοῦντες). Likewise indirect are both the shouts of encouragement at the decisive sea battle in the Great Harbour at Syracuse (7.70.7ff) and also the deceptive announcement, spread by the riders Hermocrates sent to the Athenians after their loss (7.73.3), that the Syracusans were watching the roads during the night.

Frequently, arguments found in other parts of the text (often in direct speeches) are repeated in summary form in *oratio obliqua*. Thus, in his prayer to the sun (Hdt. 7.54.2) Xerxes restates that his aim is to conquer Greece (cf. his direct speech at 7.8γ). Alexander warns the Greeks of the approaching Persian forces through messengers who repeat information already known to the reader (7.173.3). By contrast, Darius' short lie to Oeobazus, after he had

asked for one child to be spared from the campaign against the Scythians, that he would spare all of his children, is recorded in *oratio obliqua* (4.84.1), while the longer discussion, in which the motives of the actors are represented and explained, is reserved for the conversation between Xerxes and Pythius in *oratio recta* (7.38 ff).⁵²

Also in *oratio obliqua*, Syracusan ambassadors briefly relate to the Peloponnesians (Thuc. 7.25.9) events the author has already narrated (7.23.3), but add to their request for reinforcements the hope that the war will have been fought to its end (*διαπεπολεμησόμενον*) if the new expedition of the Athenians can be defeated.⁵³ This ‘messenger speech’ renders the narrative dramatic: the reader learns not new information, but rather something about the mood of the Syracusans.

Thucydides may call attention to the reminiscences of the direct speeches in the indirect speeches. As the authorial introductions reveal, in his speech at Torone Brasidas references the direct speech he gave in Acanthus (4.114.3 *ἔλεξε τοῖς ἐν τῇ Ἀκάνθῳ παραπλήσια*) and in Scione references his speeches in Acanthus and Torone (4.120.3 *ἔλεγεν ἃ τε ἐν τῇ Ἀκάνθῳ καὶ Τωρώνῃ καὶ προσέτι φάσκων*). Both short indirect speeches display additional arguments,⁵⁴ but also resume the *topoi* of the direct speeches, such as, for instance, freedom: 4.114.3 *ἐλευθερία τῆς πόλεως* = 4.85.1 *ἐλευθεροῦντες*, 86.1 *οὐκ ἐπὶ κακῷ, ἐπ’ ἐλευθερώσει*, 87.5 *ἐλευθεροῦν*; likewise 114.3 *ἐπὶ ἀγαθῷ* = 87.2 *ἐπ’ ἀγαθῷ* (cf. 4.120.3) and Sparta’s offer of friendship: 4.114.4. *φιλία* and *εὐνοῦς* and 120.3 *φίλους* synthesize the explanations of the direct speeches at 4.86.5 ff. and 87.3.

Likewise, the account of Athenian resources in Pericles’ indirect speech (Thuc. 2.13) forms an explanatory addition to his initial speech in *oratio recta* (1.140–4), in which he had shown the weakness of Athens’ enemies in respect to money (1.141 ff.) and naval

⁵² Cf. Scardino (2010).

⁵³ The expression takes up a fear (*διαπεπολεμήσεται*) also referenced by Nicias in his letter (7.14.3); the Syracusans’ words [therefore] contain a double analepsis (i.e. to both Nicias and the narrator).

⁵⁴ Cf. Hornblower (1996), 87: ‘This is a new Thucydidean technique for handling speeches: he gives in full the basic Brasidan patter (Acanthus) and thereafter adds the variants.’

resources (especially 142.5–6).⁵⁵ References to his defensive strategy and confidence in victory (2.13.9 ἀπόδειξιν τοῦ περιέσεσθαι = 1.144.1 ἐλπίδα τοῦ περιέσεσθαι) also take up themes of his first speech; the author confirms these references both at 13.2 (παρήνει . . . ἅπερ καὶ πρότερον) and in an authorial summary at 13.9.⁵⁶

In both historians, entire negotiations, councils, and conversations may stand in *oratio obliqua*. A good example is the debate in Athens over the interpretation of the oracle (Hdt. 7.142 ff.). The war council after Salamis (8.108), with its opposing opinions, is reported in indirect speech, likewise the conflict over succession between Darius' sons Artobazanes and Xerxes (7.3). Amompharetus' insubordination at the battle of Plataea (9.53 ff.) is vividly depicted over the course of several short scenes.

Thucydides depicts in indirect discourse the negotiations in Athens and Sparta that led to the building of Athens' wall (Thuc. 1.90), and also the dealings between Cleon and Nicias (4.27). Likewise in *oratio obliqua* are the accusation and defence of Alcibiades after the desecration of the Herms (6.28 f.) and the unproductive negotiations with the Rhegians (6.44.3). The negotiations between the Athenians and the Boeotians (which are carried out through heralds), and the negotiations of the Athenian generals in Sicily (6.47–9 with the contrasting passage at 7.47–9) also belong in this category.

Direct and indirect speeches frequently stand next to one another. Herodotus adds a short coda (παρενθήκη) about the wealth of Greece in *oratio obliqua* at the end of Mardonius' direct speech at 7.5.3. The negotiations on Corcyra (7.168), which contain no new themes, are represented indirectly, and also the Corcyraeans' false promise; by contrast, their rhetorically elaborate, imaginary speech

⁵⁵ Fantasia (2003), 262–93, esp. 265, summarizes the existing *communis opinio*: 'Il motivo per cui questo secondo discorso è in forma indiretta ha probabilmente a che fare con il suo contenuto quasi puramente fattuale e informativo.' Contrast Hornblower (1996), 87 and (2008), 24 and Foster (2010), 162–3, who references the rhetorical function of the indirect form of the speech, e.g. at 163: 'the choice of indirect discourse allows Thucydides to place verbs of speaking strategically, in order to emphasize certain statements as Pericles' own words. The frequent narratorial intrusions . . . sharply separate the reader, who is conducted through the speech by the narrator, from the text internal audience . . .'.

⁵⁶ In a summary of this kind, the narrator describes the speech act of another character, and has even greater control than over indirect discourse. Cf. Laird (1999), 99 ff. who speaks of 'Records of Speech Acts', and Mizzau (1999), 189. Further examples at Hdt. 4.8.3 and 8.61, Thuc. 7.69.

to Xerxes, if he should be victorious, is in *oratio recta*. Themistocles' speech in direct discourse, in which he expatiates on the reasons for the victory at Salamis, follows the unsuccessful negotiations in indirect discourse between Themistocles and Eurybiades (8.108). In their speech (9.2.1–2) the Thebans give Mardonius strategic advice and justifications in *oratio obliqua*, but close the speech with an emphatic appeal in *oratio recta*. (Herodotus has found a rhetorically effective way to cast the speech: the imperative $\pi\acute{\epsilon}\mu\pi\epsilon$ here is naturally more striking than a periphrasis in *oratio obliqua* such as $\pi\acute{\epsilon}\mu\pi\epsilon\iota\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\alpha\nu$.) Hegistratus' mistaken and overblown strategic considerations (9.90.2) stand in indirect discourse, but the dramatically effective conversation between him and Leotychidas (9.91) that follows is in direct speech. Displaying the opposite arrangement, after the offer of Sperthias and Bulis in *oratio recta* (7.136.2), Xerxes' answer is represented in indirect discourse. Likewise, after Amasis' letter and the conversations between Polycrates and the fisherman in *oratio recta*, Amasis' short missive is represented indirectly. Again, after Artembares' suggestion in *oratio recta*, Cyrus' decisive answer follows in indirect discourse, although well formulated for rhetorical effect.

In Thucydides, Pericles' indirect speech (2.13) stands adjacent to Archidamus' exhortation in *oratio recta* (2.11). In the Pylos narrative, the responses to the Spartans Cleon incites the Athenians to make (4.21.3) and the fruitless negotiations between the two sides (4.22.1–2), both in *oratio obliqua*, follow the direct speech of the Spartans (4.17–20). After the tense contest between the speakers in *oratio recta* (6.9–23) and the authorial account of the decision to undertake the expedition, Nicias' concrete requirements in respect to numbers of troops are announced in indirect discourse (6.25.2). In the negotiations between the Plataean emissaries and Archidamus (2.72–4), both short answers of the emissaries to Archidamus and also their report to their own citizens stand in *oratio obliqua* (2.72, 73.1, and 74.1), while the longer speeches, in which besides stating concrete requirements, the parties also display their motives and emotions, stand in *oratio recta* (2.71.2, 72.1, 72.3, 73.3, 74.2).

III. ARGUMENTATIVE AND RHETORICAL TOPOI

The same argumentative patterns that occur in the direct speeches generally occur in the indirect speeches. These patterns comprise abstract, concrete, and rhetorical categories.⁵⁷

An enthymeme at the end of the exhortation addressed to the Phocians (Hdt. 7.203) repeats the thought that Xerxes is no god, but a mortal man (*ἄνθρωπον*, twice *θνητόν*), who is vulnerable to changes of fortune and must therefore fall.⁵⁸ The central thought in the Phocian speech (7.203), that Xerxes, being human, was also subject to the vicissitudes of luck, is formulated in an enthymeme as a gnomic utterance.

While the Boeotians' appeal to the gods in the epilogue of their speech (Thuc. 4.97.4) makes a strong impression, the Athenians justify their behaviour through a claim advanced in an argument from probability (*εἰκός*), namely that the necessary (*ἀνάγκη*) sacrilege to the temple would find divine understanding (4.98.5–6).⁵⁹

In the conversations between Themistocles and the Andrians (Hdt. 8.111), the Athenian threatens the Andrians with two powerful gods (*θεοὺς μεγάλους*), namely persuasion and necessity (an early 'carrot and stick' pairing), who personify the resources of Athenian imperialism. The Andrians oppose these gods, whom Themistocles had, perhaps ironically, called 'useful' (*θεῶν χρηστών*) to their own 'useless' gods (*θεοὺς ἀχρήστους*): poverty and helplessness (*Πενίη*, *Ἀμηχανίη*), whom they cannot flee. The deification of the concepts puts us in mind of the sophists, even though the references to specific Athenian and Andrian divinities restrict these particular gods from general relevance.⁶⁰

Hermocrates draws on the *νόμος-φύσις* antithesis in his exhortation in *oratio obliqua* (Thuc. 7.21.3–4): Athens' experience at sea, he argues, is neither natural nor inalienable, but rather rests, as his historical example (= external analepsis) intends to demonstrate, on the compulsion created by the Persian threat (*ἀναγκασθέντας ὑπὸ*

⁵⁷ Concerning the patterns in the direct speeches cf. Scardino (2007).

⁵⁸ Solon (1.32.2), Croesus (1.207.2), and Artabanus (7.10.ε and 7.46.3) express themselves similarly in *oratio recta*.

⁵⁹ The Athenian emissaries at Melos relate their argument to the divine in a similar way. On this issue, cf. Lateiner (1977), 101–3; Orwin (1994), 91 ff. and Hornblower (1996), 89 ff.

⁶⁰ Thus Aly (1929), 99. Cf. the *gnome* in the Thessalians' direct speech at 7.172.3: οὐδαμὰ γὰρ ἀδυνασίης ἀνάγκη κρέσσων ἔφνυ (similar at Thuc. 4.87.2 ff.).

Μήδων ναυτικούς γενέσθαι).⁶¹ Just as in his direct speech at 6.34.7, he lays importance on the psychological effect of the moment of surprise, which can compensate, in his view, not only for the Syracusans' deficiencies of personnel and materiel, but also for their lack of experience. The psychological analysis is outlined with a variety of terms: for daring (*τολμηρούς, τοὺς ἀντιτολμώντας, θράσει, τολμήσαι*), for fright (*καταφοβούσι, ἐκπλαγέντων*), for the shock of the unexpected (*ἀπροσδοκῆτως*), and as contrasting pairs, the abstract nouns *δύναμις* ↔ *θράσος* and *ἐπιστήμη* ↔ *ἀπειρία*.⁶²

Aspects of strategy and rule are themes in Alcibiades' indirect speech at Thuc. 8.46. He advises Tissaphernes not to support Sparta's bid for sea power, but rather to allow control over land and sea to remain separated between Athens and Sparta (*ἔχειν δ' ἀμφοτέρους ἔαν δίχα τὴν ἀρχήν*) for the purpose of wearing down the two sides upon each other. He advises him to support Athens, since the Athenians have few landed interests, but keep their subordinates enslaved, while the Spartans, as he shows in an argument from probability (*εἰκός*), give themselves out to be liberators (forms of *ἐλευθεροῦν* thrice). Phrynichus asserts in his speech (8.48.5) that the decisive consideration for the allies was not the type of constitution under which they might live, but rather their own relative subordination or freedom (thus the two antithetical pairs *ὀλιγαρχία* ↔ *δημοκρατία* and *δουλεῖν* ↔ *ἐλευθέρους εἶναι*).

Nicias' refusal (Thuc. 7.48.3 ff.) to bring the expedition home without the decision of the assembly is also represented in indirect discourse. He justifies his fear that he will later be blamed by the men of the assembly, whose nature he claims to understand (*αὐτός γε ἐπιστάμενος τὰς Ἀθηναίων φύσεις*),⁶³ with a general description of the assembly's practices. In his view, slanderous rhetoric (*ἀλλ' ἐξ ὧν ἂν τις εὖ λέγων διαβάλλοι*), not statements resting on autopsy, generally prevailed in the assembly.

⁶¹ Cf. Hdt. 7.144. 2 and Thuc. 1.73.4.

⁶² The Athenian general Phormio argues similarly at 2.89 in *oratio recta* (cf. 2.89.6 *ἀντιτολμᾶν*) and Lamachus also emphasizes the moment of surprise in his indirect speech at 6.49 (cf. *αἰφνίδιοι, τῇ γνώμῃ ἀναθαρσοῦντας, τῇ ὄψει καταφρονεῖν, ἐκφοβῆσαι*).

⁶³ With this assertion he repeats a formulation from his letter (*τὰς φύσεις ἐπιστάμενος ὑμῶν* 7.14.4). On the problem of communication cf. also his speech at 6.9 (on which cf. Scardino 2007, 693 ff.)

The τελικὰ κεφάλαια (like *iustum, aequum, facile, utile*, and their opposites) also play an important role: the following examples are in indirect discourse unless otherwise noted. Many indirect speeches reference justice and fairness: Demaratus introduces his Spartan analogy (Hdt. 7.3.3) by calling on both (οὔτε οἰκὸς οὔτε δίκαιον). At Torone, Brasidas expressly underlines the justice (δίκαιον) of his mission (Thuc. 4.114.3) in a sharply antithetical construction, displaying polysyndeton and the accumulation of negative adverbs: οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ δουλείᾳ οὐδὲ χρήμασι . . . ἀλλ' ἐπὶ ἀγαθῷ καὶ ἐλευθερίᾳ τῆς πόλεως, in which the central concepts δουλεία and ἐλευθερία form the outer, emphasized, frame, and take up the rhetoric of 'liberating Greece' from his direct speech, as was mentioned above. In addition, he flatters his listeners in Scione with the καλόν of their deed and the τιμὴ that will result from it. In the same mode, Alcibiades accuses the allies of injustice (8.45.4).

In Herodotus' depiction of the disagreement between the Spartan commanders and Amompharetus, Amompharetus employs the term αἰσχρόν: he refuses to disgrace Sparta (9.53.2 αἰσχυνέειν τὴν Σπάρτην) by leaving his post. Keeping his personal fate in mind, at 7.48.4 Nicias prefers a heroic conclusion in a battle against enemies to a disgraceful and unjust trial at Athens (ἐπ' αἰσχρᾷ τε αἰτίᾳ καὶ ἀδίκῳ ὑπ' Ἀθηναίων ἀπολέσθαι). Phrynichus (Thuc. 8.27.2) also makes use of the term αἰσχρόν, which appears four times (once as a comparative) and is opposed antithetically to danger (κίνδυνος); in this antithesis he is calling disgraceful not the withdrawal of the Athenian fleet, but rather the Athenians' willingness to undertake a foolish risk. Appeals to fearlessness and courage appear primarily in the exhortations. At Thuc. 7.5.3 ff. Gylippus combines an emphatic appeal to honour with the Dorian ideology of natural superiority: it would be unbearable if the Dorian Sicilians would not consider it a matter of honour to drive out of Sicily Ionians who live on islands and whom he contemptuously calls 'a crowd washed up by the sea' (ξυγκλύδων ἀνθρώπων).⁶⁴

The objects of the negotiations between the Athenians and Boeotians (Thuc. 4.97 ff.) are on the one hand the injustice (97.2

⁶⁴ ξύγκλυς is a hapax legomenon in Thucydides. LSJ s.v. σύγκλυς: 'washed together by the waves' and as metaphor 'crowd, mob, rabble'.

δικαίως, 98.1 ἀδικῆσαι) of the Athenian profanation of a temple, on the other, the fact that the Boeotians have not returned the Athenian dead, an omission the Athenians call sacrilege (98.7 ἀσεβεῖν). Both sides point to the common law of the Greeks in making their argument (4.97.2 νόμιμα τῶν Ἑλλήνων and 4.98.2 νόμον τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν).

Both Cleon and Nicias (who is being ironic) describe the expedition against the Spartans on Sphacteria as 'easy' (ῥάδιον; Thuc. 4.27.5 and 4.28.1). The Athenian double agent at 6.64.3 justifies his plan as *facile* (ῥαδίως). Herodotus' Thebans (9.2.2) contrast the negative and positive concepts (negative χαλεπά and positive ἀπόνως).

The main argument of the short exhortation of the Egestan emissaries (Thuc. 6.6.2) is their relationship (ξυγγενές) to the Athenians. In turn, during their unsuccessful negotiations with the Rhegians (6.44.3), the Athenians use the argument that they are related to the Leontinians; the Rhegians, on the other hand, speak of Italian solidarity. The Athenians likewise name alliance and blood relation (ξυμμαχίαν καὶ ξυγγένειαν) as official motives for the expedition to Sicily (e.g. 6.50.4).

Demosthenes argues with *utile* (ὠφελιμώτερον), *facile* (οὐκέτι ῥάδιον), and *aequum* (εἰκός) when he requires an immediate withdrawal from Sicily (Thuc. 7.47.3). However, expedience is also important: Xerxes' argument about sparing the Greek spies (Hdt. 7.47.1, see the more detailed discussion below) orients itself according to usefulness (συμφέρον). In the same way, Themistocles references usefulness (ἄμεινον, ὠφελιμώτερον,) for Athens and the allies (Thuc. 1.91.6), Pericles denies inexpedience for the city (οὐ μέντοι ἐπὶ κακῷ γε τῆς πόλεως Thuc. 2.13.2), and Alcibiades claims usefulness to Tissaphernes (Thuc. 8.46.3 ἐπιτηδειοτέρους, ξυμφορώτατον).

Very important in the indirect speeches are references to money and materiel. These are Artabazus' central arguments (Hdt. 9.41). Hermocrates and Gylippus both speak of weaponry (Thuc. 6.72.2 and 7.5.3). In his speech, Pericles encourages the Athenians by reviewing Athens' money supply (2.13). In the hortatory part of his speech (7.49.5), Nicias describes the dubious condition of the Syracusans and their lack of money on account of the many mercenaries. Opposing the dictum he had formulated in his own direct speech, namely to spare Athenian resources (6.9.3), and contrasting to Demosthenes (7.48.6), Nicias recommends drawing out

(*τρύβειν*)⁶⁵ the siege, and not allowing it to founder for want of money (*χρήμασιν*).

IV. THE RHETORICAL SOPHISTICATION OF THE INDIRECT SPEECHES

The indirect speeches display a large variety of well-developed methods of argumentation. In the conflict between Darius' sons, Artobazanes and Xerxes (Hdt. 7.3), the older Artobazanes argues *per analogiam*, basing his position on the generally accepted custom of mankind (*νομιζόμενον εἶη πρὸς πάντων ἀνθρώπων*) that the oldest son follows his father as ruler. In opposition, Xerxes founds his claim with the 'historical' argument that he is the eldest son of Darius' chief wife, Atossa, who is the daughter of Cyrus, the founder of the Persian Empire, and the one who gave the Persians their freedom (*ὁ κτησάμενος τοῖς Πέρσῃσι τὴν ἐλευθερίην*). In addition, Demaratus formulates a supporting argument in antithetical clauses reminiscent of the sophists (7.3.2): Xerxes had been born while Darius was already king and possessed his whole power. By contrast, Artobazanes was born while Darius was still a private man. He substantiates this argument with an analogy, not otherwise mentioned by the narrator, to Sparta, where it was customary (*νομίζεσθαι*) that not the oldest son, but rather the son born first during the kingship of the father would succeed. As an addition to Xerxes' 'historical' argument, Demaratus' well-calculated comparison weakens Artobazanes' general observation through a suitable ethnological analogy that trumps Artobazanes' explanation based on human *nomoi*.

As he is considering whether to spare the Greek spies (Hdt. 7.147.1), Xerxes asserts that it is useful for the Persians to send these emissaries back to Greece unharmed: there would be negative consequences if the Persians killed these emissaries, since the Greeks would not receive an impression of Persian power, and the killing of three men would not constitute an important loss for the Greeks. By contrast, if the enemy spies lived and went home, the Greeks would discover the power of the Persians and would voluntarily surrender

⁶⁵ This policy also forms a conceptual contrast to Demosthenes' requirement at 7.47.3 *μὴ διατρύβειν*.

their freedom (τῇν ἰδίην ἐλευθερίην), sparing the Persians the necessity to fight them. The theme of the speech, 'the decision to kill or not to kill the spies', is formulated in view of the consequences for the expedition in two symmetrical periods, in which the two expected consequences are opposed ((1) No news of Xerxes' power ↔ news of Xerxes' power; (2) No great harm to the enemy = no particular use to the Persians ↔ great possible use). As a thought experiment Xerxes' analysis is logical and consistent with the quantitative tendency of his thought. Xerxes forgives the spies not so much out of generosity as out of political calculation, and is characterized as a person who is definitely capable of rational thought. The qualities of leaders can also emerge in the argument of Thucydides' indirect speeches: for instance, Pericles uses a *concessio* (Thuc 2.13.2) to show that Archidamus is his guest-friend, but specifically establishes that this will not harm the city.

In Thucydides, Themistocles likewise uses an external flashback to Xerxes' expedition (1.91.5) as an analogy in order to justify the building of the Athenian city wall, and he establishes the usefulness of the wall for everyone (i.e. not just for the Athenians, but also for the other Greeks) through the general maxim (1.91.7), that only a corresponding war power would make the Athenians equal partners in council.

In the debate at Athens about the interpretation of the oracle concerning Athens' fate in the Persian Wars (Hdt. 7.142 ff.) Themistocles successfully sponsors an opinion opposed to that of the older citizens and specialized interpreters, who hold the wooden fortification of the Acropolis to be the 'wooden wall' to which the oracle refers. In his somewhat sophistic interpretation⁶⁶ Themistocles excludes the possibility of defeat because of the epithet *θείη*, applied to the island of Salamis; Apollo would have indicated defeat with a pejorative such as *σχετλίη*.

In his speech at 8.181, Eurybiades sketches a hypothetical and doubly disastrous future, if the Persians, with their retreat cut off, should be forced to remain in Europe: they would not be able to remain quiet (*ἡσυχίην μὴ ἄγειν*), but rather, he exaggerates, driven by hunger they would conquer all of Europe with force or with alliances, and live from the harvest of Greece. Since after their defeat

⁶⁶ His manner of interpretation is reminiscent of the sophistical interpretation of poetry evident, for instance, in Plato's *Protagoras*, 339 ff.

the Persians did not wish to stay, he argues that it was best to allow them to withdraw to their land without hindrance, and then later to take the offensive. In Thucydides, the plan presented in the lying speech (Thuc. 6.64.3) of the Athenian double agent is also sketched as a hypothetical future scenario (εἰ). Similarly, the speech of the Egestaeans emissaries (6.6.2) gives gnomic expression (σῶφρον) to advice recommending a vigilant defence, and supports this advice with a depiction of the otherwise negative outcome (prolepsis).

The indirect speeches naturally also contribute to the characterization of the speakers, in which regard we may note instances of ethopoiesis in the selection of words. Amompharetus' use of the word ξείνους to denote the Persians (Hdt. 9.53.2 and 55.2) is typically Spartan, as the author had explained at 9.11.2. Thucydides' Boeotians use the word ὁμωχέτας (4.97.4), which is for the Suda a Βοιωτικὴ λέξις.⁶⁷

The foolish and arrogant mannerisms of the demagogue Cleon, which the author describes as κουφολογία (28.5), are illustrated through Cleon's statements in the assembly before his expedition to Pylos (Thuc. 4.27 f.): thus, Cleon asserts (27.3) that if the generals were men (εἰ ἄνδρες εἶεν οἱ στρατηγοί), they would swiftly conquer the island, and he adds that if he were general, that's what he would do (καὶ αὐτός γ' ἄν, εἰ ἦρχε, ποιῆσαι τοῦτο). His hyperbolic statement at the end of the scene (28.4), that he would finish the affair in twenty days (ἢ ἄξιεν Λακεδαιμονίους ζῶντας ἢ αὐτοῦ ἀποκτενεῖν), is equally characteristic.

Similar to the direct speeches, in the indirect speeches we find particles that display the emotional tension of the speaker. To these belong the emphatic γέ⁶⁸ or ἦ που δὴ of Phrynichos' speech at Thuc. 8.27.3.⁶⁹

Indirect speeches may display a large variety of figures and tropes. For instance, the formulation κατ' ἄρσιν καὶ θέσιν, which expresses the same statement both positively and negatively, creates a striking antithesis. Demosthenes gives emphatic weight to his demand (Thuc. 7.47.4) to leave Sicily through the formula ἀπιέναι . . . καὶ μὴ διατρίβειν ('to go away . . . and not to spend more time').⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Cf. Hornblower (1996), 311.

⁶⁸ Cf. Thuc. 2.13.1, 4.27.3, 6.72.3, 7.48.4, 8.27.3 (twice).

⁶⁹ ἦ που δὴ occurs otherwise only in direct speeches (Thuc. 1.142.3, 5.100, 6.37.2).

⁷⁰ Likewise Thuc. 7.21.4 ἵεναι . . . καὶ μὴ ἀποκνεῖν.

The Scythians' negative view of the Ionians, whom they designate not as free men, but as obedient slaves (ἀνδράποδα φιλοδέσποτά . . . καὶ ἄδρηστα μάλιστα), is expressed in a strictly antithetical parallelism built with superlatives, three of which are Herodotean hapax legomena (ἀνανδροτάτους, φιλοδέσποτα, ἄδρηστα) and with many bright a-sounds (some alliterative),⁷¹ expressive of indignation and contempt. Similarly artistic is Cyrus' answer and closing sentence (9.122.3), which contains a polyptoton μαλακῶν – μαλακοῦς and an antithesis with chiasmus and word-repetition μαλακοῦς ἄνδρας – ἄνδρας ἀγαθοῦς, which resuscitates the courage leitmotif. The main argument of the Phocian speech (7.203), that Xerxes as a mortal man is vulnerable to the movements of fate, is rhetorically amplified with antitheses, assonance, litotes, and polyptoton. In the Andrian answer to Themistocles (8.11.3) the pun and negation emphasize that their powerlessness is stronger than Athens' power (οὐδέποτε γὰρ <ἄν> τῆς ἐωυτῶν ἀδυναμίας τὴν Ἀθηναίων δύναμιν εἶναι κρέσσω). Amompharetus underlines his refusal to move from the spot at Plataea (9.55.2) with an etymological play on words featuring alliteration and assonance ψήφω ψηφίζεσθαι.

In Thucydides, conventional rhetorical *patterns* lend emphasis to the exhortations of the battle in the Great Harbour (7.70.7 ff.): the Athenians, who are trying to force their escape from Syracuse, motivate their side with cries that this is their last chance (cf. now, if ever: νῦν, εἴ ποτε καὶ αὖθις) of salvation to the fatherland (ἐς τὴν πατρίδα σωτηρίαν);⁷² the Syracusans, who are trying to prevent the Athenian escape, argue, as do the *Feldherrenreden* that preceded this battle (7.66–8, in *oratio recta*), with the καλόν of a victory for one's own country. The Athenians cheer on their ships' captains with a paradoxical rhetorical question: whether they thought the most hostile land (τὴν πολεμιωτάτην γῆν οἰκειοτέραν) more homelike than the sea they had with such difficulty (οὐ διὰ ὀλίγου πόνου) conquered. The Syracusans accomplish the same task with a paradoxical accusation against their captains: whether they were fleeing the fugitives (φεύγοντας φεύγουσι). The rhetorical formation of these questions, with paradox, superlatives, rhetorical questions,

⁷¹ Similarly Nicias ἐπ' αἰσχροῖ τε αἰτίαι καὶ ἀδίκως ὑπ' Ἀθηναίων ἀπολέσθαι (Thuc. 7.48.3).

⁷² In this passage it is interesting that the *deixis* of the temporal adverb belongs to the speaker, as in *oratio recta*, and not to the narrator.

litotes, and paradoxical paronomasia, produces an emphatic effect and transfers to the reader an impression of the dramatic tension of this situation.

V. EXAMPLES

The results obtained up to this point will be illustrated in one example each from Herodotus and Thucydides.

(a)

In the consultation before the battle of Plataea (Hdt. 9.41) both Artabazus and Mardonius are emphatically reintroduced with patronymics;⁷³ in addition Artabazus is described as a Persian in high repute with the king (*ἀνὴρ δόκιμος παρὰ Ξέρξη* as at 8.126.1).

To begin, Artabazus argues that the Persians should retreat behind the city walls of Thebes, since at Thebes enough food for both men and beasts (*σίτόν . . . χόρτον*) is available. From Thebes, the Persians could prosecute a diplomatic strategy (recommended by the Thebans at 9.2 in *oratio recta*) and without a lot of trouble (*κατ' ἡσυχίην*) arrive at the goal of conquering Greece. He supports this argument by describing the Persians' large supply of money: in his enumeration the triple anaphora of *πολλόν*, enclosed by the words *χρυσόν* and *ἄργυρον*, marks the decisive financial strength of the Persians with a growing tri-colon construction (9.41.3: *ἔχειν γὰρ χρυσόν πολλόν μὲν ἐπίσημον πολλόν δὲ καὶ ἄσημον, πολλόν δὲ ἄργυρόν τε καὶ ἐκπώματα*). None of this should be spared (*φειδομένους μηδενός*), he argues, but rather should be used to bribe the Greek elite (marked as the targets of the strategy with polyptotic *reduplicatio* *Ἑλλήνας, Ἑλλήνων*). Joined to this statement with *καὶ* is the expression of Artabazus' expectation that the Greeks would quickly give up their freedom (*ἐλευθερίην*).⁷⁴ Finally, he

⁷³ Asheri et al. (2006), 235: 'I due personaggi vengono qui ripresentati con i loro patronimici, come se fossero caratteri nuovi, forse per drammatizzare il dialogo esemplare che segue.' Artabazus was described as the commander of the Parthians and Chorasmians at 7.66, and his unsuccessful campaign against Potidea was depicted in 8.126–9.

⁷⁴ Xerxes says the same thing in his indirect speech at 7.147.1.

repeats his recommendation that the Persians should undertake no risks (*ἀνακινδυνεύειν συμβάλλοντας*), expressing himself in such a way that this recommendation forms the negative complement to what is for him a positive statement (*κατ' ἡσυχίην τε ἱζομένους διαπρήσσεσθαι*). Artabazus is clever enough to suppress any mention of the possible negative consequences of renewing the fight with the Greeks (he never mentions the possibility of a Greek victory, for instance), since this would give Mardonius, who is convinced of Persian military superiority, a point to attack, and he himself would appear to be defeatist.

The speech displays the following structure:

1. Direct recommendation to withdraw to Thebes, justified with logistical arguments.
2. Suggestion to undertake a diplomatic strategy towards achieving the Persians' goals (*κατ' ἡσυχίην*).

Since they have a lot of money they should (instead of attacking):

- a) Bribe the Greek elite—Consequence: the Greeks would give up their freedom;
- b) not take any risks.

In an authorial statement Herodotus remarks that Artabazus' suggestion agreed with that of the Thebans, and states that he had greater foreknowledge (*προειδότης πλεῖν*); he opposes this opinion to Mardonius' vote, which Herodotus very emphatically (with polysyndeton, homoioteleuton, and climax) characterizes as *ἰσχυροτέρη τε καὶ ἀγνωμονεστέρη καὶ οὐδαμῶς συγγνωσκομένη* 'more forceful and less reasonable and entirely unsympathetic', thus unmistakably directing the reader's reception of Mardonius' speech in advance.

Consistent with other passages, Mardonius first briefly expresses his opinion that the Persian forces are much stronger than the Greek forces, and with this, attempts implicitly to refute Artabazus' warning.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Mardonius is in agreement with his own speech at 8.100.2ff., with the expectations of the Persians at 8.130.3, and also with his own analysis at 8.136.2ff. Moreover, these strategic considerations also agree with the advice of Timagenides to wait no longer (9.38.2).

His artistically antithetical clauses (*καθ' ἄρσιν καὶ θέσιν*) each contain a positive and a negative statement (*τε - μηδέ, τε - μηδέ*), which are all together adversarially juxtaposed to the second part of the sentence (*ἀλλὰ ...*). Moreover, the word *συμβάλλειν*, which takes up Artabazus' final word (*συμβάλλοντας*), stands emphatically in an initial and final position in this construction: first, Mardonius demands an immediate (*τὴν ταχίστην*) pre-emptive attack, before the Greeks can gather greater numbers (with the polyptoton *συλλεγομένους ... συλλελεγμένων*); second, he requires that the Persians stop waiting for favourable auspices, but rather attack, according to Persian custom (*νόμῳ τῷ Περσέων*). Mardonius therefore disregards all warnings and insists on an attack, in support of which attitude he, like Xerxes in the war council (7.8a), calls upon the 'imperialistic' Persian *nomos*. Herodotus' emphasis on Mardonius' deficient respect for signs from the gods and his introduction to this speech are both clear signals that Mardonius is near to his doom.

Together with the authorial commentary, these speeches characterize their speakers: the 'warner' Artabazus elucidates a possible alternative strategy, and forms a contrasting figure to the protagonist Mardonius.⁷⁶ Both speakers employ paratactic sentence structures, although Mardonius' style is simpler (in Artabazus' speech, which is nearly twice as long as Mardonius' speech, we find at least a dependent clause and a number of participial constructions).

(b)

After the defeat of the Syracusans in their first battle with the Athenians (Thuc. 6.72) Hermocrates affirms (consistently with the narrator at 6.69) that in the battle not a lack of courage (*γνώμην*), but rather a lack of order (*ἀταξίαν*) had harmed them (*βλάψαι*). He likewise affirms that their loss was smaller than one might suppose (*εἰκός*), since they had measured themselves against the most experienced (*πρώτοις ... ἐμπειρία*) of the Greeks. On the contrary, the many commanders (*πλήθος τῶν στρατηγῶν, πολυαρχίαν*) and the chaotic disorder (*ἄξύντακτον ἀναρχίαν*) of the troops had harmed them. Parallel clauses, paronomasia, the hapax *ἄξύντακτον*, the wordplay on *πολυαρχίαν* – *ἀναρχίαν*, and

⁷⁶ Cf. Flower and Marincola (2002), 181.

end-rhymes (twice: as – es / as – es) lend emphasis to these statements. The authorial parenthesis (6.72.4) that confirms Hermocrates' assertion about the problematic abundance of generals directly influences reader reception of the speech and provides further information.

Hermocrates softens his requirements that the Syracusans should elect fewer, better experienced generals, and also better train and arm their hoplites, by making his advice the protasis of a hypothetical sentence, the apodosis of which, emphasized through the repetition of the *verbum dicendi* ἔφη, promises victory.⁷⁷ The likelihood of victory (εἰκός) will increase, he argues, since they will have acquired discipline (εὐταξία) in addition to their courage (ἀνδρεία), and will therefore have become superior to their enemies. In this argument, which rests on the a priori assumption that Dorians are naturally endowed with superior capacities, and on the opposition φύσις–τέχνη, which reframes the initial contrast between the Syracusans' γνώμη and chance material factors, Hermocrates encourages the Syracusans with the predictions that their discipline will improve through practising under dangerous conditions (μετὰ κινδύνων μελετωμένην), and their courage (εὐψυχίαν) will grow more daring (θαρσαλεωτέραν) through increasing trust in their capacities (μετὰ τοῦ πιστοῦ τῆς ἐπιστήμης).⁷⁸

In the recapitulation he requests that a small number of generals with unrestricted power be elected and allowed to manage affairs according to their best knowledge, at which point he emphatically introduces (ἡ μὲν) the oath the generals were to pledge.⁷⁹ Only in this manner could secrets be kept and the preparations set in order and carried out without delay.

Considered in terms of its structure, his speech looks approximately like this:

1. Thesis: Not their γνώμη, but rather their ἀταξία had harmed them (βλάψαι):

⁷⁷ Hermocrates also uses courteous address as a politeness strategy in his direct speech at Syracuse (6.34.4), where his suggestion is likewise expressed in a hypothetical sentence (εἰ ἐθέλωμεν . . . ἐκπλήξαμεν κτλ.).

⁷⁸ Cf. Gylippus (7.5.3 ff.).

⁷⁹ This particle, which 'introduces a strong and confident asseveration', serves primarily to introduce 'oaths and pledges, usually in indirect speech'. Denniston (1951), 351.

- a) Their inferiority to the experienced Athenians is less than *εἰκός*.
 - b) Harm originates from the *πολυαρχία* (as the author confirms).
2. A hypothetical sentence (courteous address) with an apodosis promising victory: fewer, but more experienced (*ἔμπειροι*) generals, well-armed hoplites, and practice, would bring victory and progress (as an *εἰκός* argument), since with the addition of *ἐπιστήμη* and *μελέτη* the Syracusans' natural capacities would prove superior.
 3. Epilogue (*recapitulatio*): Recommendation emphatically repeated and established through the oath formula.

VI. CONCLUSION

Like the direct speeches, the indirect speeches serve to dramatize the story and characterize the speakers, as well as to comment implicitly on the events. The longer and more complex direct speeches provide a direct presentation of important material at dramatic high points of the work, for instance, when there is a council before an expedition, before borders are crossed, or before decisive battles.⁸⁰ By contrast, the usually shorter indirect speeches occupy moments of less intense emotion, and serve in an abbreviated and economical form for the summarization, from a greater distance, of discussions that are largely factual, and for the repetition of arguments and thoughts previously expressed.

⁸⁰ In Herodotus, for example, the conversation between Croesus and Solon (1.29–33), the constitutional debate before Darius takes the throne (3.80–2), the royal council and the dreams before Xerxes' expedition to Greece (7.8–18), before the crossing of the Hellespont (7.46–52 and 101–4), before and after the battle of Salamis (8.57, 60, and 68, 8.100–2, and 8.108–10). In Thucydides, for example, the Congress at Sparta (1.67–86), Pericles' first speech, before the war breaks out (1.140–4), the Funeral Oration (2.35–46) before, and the last speech (2.60–4) after, the plague, the debate on the fate of Mytilene (3.37–48), the Melian Dialogue (5.85–113), the trio of speeches before the Sicilian Expedition (6.9–23) and the reaction in Syracuse (6.33–41), the speeches before the battle in the Great Harbour (7.61–8), and before the catastrophe (7.77); cf. Scardino (2007), 717 ff.

The author, who marks his presence not only before or after, but also during the speech through the repetition of the *verbum dicendi* or explanatory parentheses, dispels the illusion of a self-enclosed speech and guides the reception of the speech more openly than is the case with the direct speeches. In the shorter indirect speeches and exhortations concrete analyses and plans are explained, demands aired, official motives and *topoi*, but also deceptive messages, expressed. Both authors employ general reflections that transcend particular situations and use abstract concepts (e.g. as *gnomai*), arguments from probability or analogy, syllogisms and enthymemes, contrary to fact hypotheses, prognostication, analepsis, *τελικά κεφάλαια*, and other rhetorical devices.⁸¹ On the other hand, themes such as the causes of the war, or questions about the nature of rhetoric, for instance, are absent—these conceptual areas are reserved for *oratio recta* (e.g. Thuc. 2.35, 3.38 and 42, 6.9, 6.33, etc.). While most of the longer direct speeches contain several arguments, and achieve a higher level of abstraction, many indirect speeches have only one argument. The rhetorical formation of the indirect speeches is definitely artistic, however, and is scarcely less elaborate than that of the direct speeches.

In Herodotus the indirect speeches are mostly short and determined by their situation; they seldom engage abstract themes, except for the selective repetition of previous arguments. In Thucydides some longer indirect speeches appear; both his direct and indirect speeches reflect a greater concern with the psychological aspects of characters and events. On the whole, the commonalities between the two historians in the use of this stylistic mode outweigh the differences.

It is not easy to assess whether the absence of direct speeches in book 8 of Thucydides indicates a tendency away from direct speeches towards indirect speeches, particularly as he includes long and

⁸¹ Incorrect is Vattuone (1978), 198: 'La differenza fra *logoi* diretti ed indiretti non è solamente formale. Quando si parla nei secondi di un "assenza di strutturazione" (niente *πίστεις* e cioè *εἰκότα*, *παραδείγματα*, *γνώμαι* etc.), quindi di valori di *dispositio*, si deve intendere che, contemporaneamente, viene a mancare un grado di significazione.' He concedes (1978: 203) that 'Quanto poi al problema della funzione dei discorsi indiretti . . . una risposta si possa trovare solo caso per caso', concludes however (ibid.): 'Senza dubbio, comunque, si può affermare che l'*unità narrativa lineare* conferisca a questo tipo di discorsi una funzione intermedia fra quella dei *logoi* diretti e quella degli *erga*, più vicina a quella dei secondi che a quella dei primi.'

complex indirect speeches before book 8 (e.g. 2.13, 4.97 ff., 6.72);⁸² we can probably follow Hornblower, who argues that *oratio obliqua* is an alternative method Thucydides uses in order to inject his opinion more forcefully into the speeches.⁸³ Since the indirect speeches in Thucydides are framed with formulae similar to those with which the direct speeches are introduced and closed, and display similar rhetorical formation, and similar concepts and arguments, they are to be accounted to the category of speeches, according to the standards of Thucydides' explanations at 1.22.1, and since they evince the same level of fictionality as the direct speeches, can hardly claim greater authenticity than the direct speeches.⁸⁴ This same conclusion is valid for Herodotus' indirect speeches.

As far as the content and style of speeches in *oratio obliqua* are concerned, there is often no difference from those in *oratio recta*. In some cases an indirect speech could stand just as well in *oratio recta* (Hdt. 7.203, 8.108; Thuc. 4.97 ff., 6.72, 8.46). For this reason, and this is to return to Laird's suggestion,⁸⁵ which can now be made more precise, although indirect speeches (usually) display a shorter length and a lower level of dramatization, as well as greater authorial control, one can consider both types of speech as functionally equal exegetical tools in historical representation.

⁸² Schmid and Stählin (1948), 164, basing themselves on Cratippus' witness (FGrHist 64), hypothesized 'daß Thukydides seine Ansicht über die Zulässigkeit direkter Reden in einem wissenschaftlichen Geschichtswerk geändert . . . hat, daß also ihr Fehlen im achten Buch nicht ein Zeichen der Unvollkommenheit der Form, sondern ein Beweis letzten wissenschaftlichen Ernstes und Verantwortungsgefühles ist.' Likewise, Proctor (1980), 157 holds that the indirect speeches were a newer method that gradually replaced the direct speeches because of their greater closeness to the facts.

⁸³ Hornblower (2008), 24 ff.

⁸⁴ While for Eggermann (1972), 576 ff. 1.21–2 is valid only for direct speeches and, whereas the indirect speeches are 'sinngetreue Inhaltsreferate' (581), to which different rules apply, Dover (1973), 23 and Wilson (1982), 10 ff. rightly relate the validity of 1.21–2 to the indirect speeches. The introductory formulae of the speeches at 2.13 *παρήναι δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν παρόντων* and 6.46.5 *πρὸς τὰ παρόντα ἐβουλεύοντο* are reminiscent of the formulation of 1.22.1 *περὶ τῶν αἰεὶ παρόντων*. The verb *θαρούνειν* introduces in five out of seven occurrences speeches and exhortations in *oratio recta* (2.59.3, 2.72.3, 2.88.1) and *oratio obliqua* (4.115.1 and 6.72.2). The pronouns *τοσαῦτα* (4.98.1 and 7.49.1) und *τοιαῦτα* (4.115.1) also occur at the end of direct speeches; cf. Scardino (2007), 453.

⁸⁵ See above, n. 16–18.

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The ‘Rationality’ of Herodotus and Thucydides as Evidenced by Their Respective Use of Numbers*

Catherine Rubincam

Greek historians regularly criticized their predecessors. Sometimes, as in the sustained denigration of Timaeus in Polybius’ twelfth book, the criticisms named a specific individual and referred to particular passages in his work; more often, as in Thucydides’ engagement with Herodotus, the critique is delivered less explicitly and without naming its object.¹ Given the iconic status of the two great founders of Greek historiography, and the obvious differences between their works, it was inevitable that they should be compared, and that the weighing of their respective merits and demerits should become a favourite rhetorical exercise. Dionysius of Halicarnassus took up the cudgels, not surprisingly, on behalf of his compatriot (Dion. Hal. *ad Pomp.* 3). His ranking of Herodotus ahead of Thucydides on every

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¹ See Hornblower (1996), 122–45.

one of his five criteria relating to subject matter has provoked from modern scholars strenuous denunciations of Dionysius' intelligence.² They have particularly criticized his judgements that Thucydides' choice of subject was less praiseworthy (his war was insufficiently glorious in its outcome), that Thucydides' 'decision' to end his narrative six years before the end of the war was ill-considered, and that the chronological organization of his narrative 'by summers and winters' interfered with its coherence.³

It is typical of Dionysius, literary critic and teacher of rhetoric, that nowhere in his discussion does he compare the accuracy of the two historians—something more likely to figure among modern scholars' criteria of excellence. In fact, modern scholarship tended for much of the twentieth century to esteem Thucydides much more highly as a writer of history than Herodotus, seeing in the younger historian an attitude more akin to modern secular rationalism, in his preference for naturalistic and non-theological explanations of historical events, and approving of his choice of a subject closer to his own time, which enabled him to get access to much more accurate information.⁴ Paul Keyser's recent article, '(Un)natural Accounts in Herodotus and Thucydides',⁵ has challenged this modern anti-Dionysian preference for Thucydides with regard particularly to one aspect of the two historians' practice, namely their respective statements on eclipses, earthquakes, and quantifiable phenomena: 'Rational readers of Herodotus or Thucydides', he argues, 'must (re)consider the engagement of the two authors with reason and tradition. Herodotus' accounts are no less, and often more, rational than the corresponding kinds of accounts in Thucydides' (Keyser 2006, 349).

² See e.g. Usher's introduction to this work in the Loeb edition (1974: 350): 'Herodotus is judged to be superior to Thucydides in his choice of subject. There could be no clearer indication of the intellectual weakness of the rhetorical mentality than this extraordinary statement, which has long been the object of deserved scorn and adds nothing to Dionysius' own stature as a critic, or indeed as a historian.'

³ Dion. Hal. *ad Pomp.* 3 lists five criteria relating to subject matter (*κατὰ τὸν πραγματικὸν τόπον*), on all of which he judges Thucydides to be inferior to Herodotus. These are: (i) choice of subject, (ii) choice of beginning and end points, (iii) choice of events to record, (iv) organization and arrangement of the narrative, and (v) attitude of the author towards the events narrated. When he turns to comparing the two historians in terms of style (*κατὰ τὸν λεκτικὸν τόπον*), he finds them about equally meritorious, although their particular excellences are different.

⁴ Hornblower (1996) and Keyser (2006), 324–5.

⁵ Keyser (2006).

This article will take up the discussion of the last part of Keyser's topic: the use of numbers by these two historians. It aims to broaden the framework for examining their numeric practice, setting on one side initially the 'rationality/irrationality' dichotomy as Keyser employs it. If we do that, I shall argue, we may find ourselves more aware of the general differences in numeric mentality between all ancient Greek historians and ourselves, and more open-minded in our search for explanations of the specific differences between Herodotus and Thucydides.

First, a brief summary of Keyser's argument. He observes that Herodotus takes a lot of trouble to show his readers the calculations by which he comes up with some of the most important numbers in his narrative: for example, 'the almost 11 myriad troops at Plataea (9.29.2–30), the 20 myriad and more days of life (1.32.2–4), and the 528 myriads of Xerxes' army (7.186.2)' (Keyser 2006, 337). He concludes that this evident facility with the best contemporary methods of arithmetical computation (using the abacus) shows a 'rational' and 'scientific' attitude in advance of most of his contemporaries. By contrast, Thucydides, although he includes many numbers in his narrative, does not set out his calculations—in Keyser's words, he 'never explicitly divides or even multiplies' (Keyser 2006, 337), and he sometimes supplies numbers that he seems not to have interrogated to verify their plausibility—an attitude that marks him as a less good mathematician, and therefore less 'rational' and 'scientific', than Herodotus.

Keyser bases his argument on a large selection of the many passages in both historians' works that involve numerical information, focusing particularly on 'those involving some kind of reckoning, for which a rational analysis could be given'; i.e. leaving aside 'numerous passages [that] simply give a number' (Keyser 2006, 336). For Herodotus his selection comprises fourteen cases of numerical calculation,⁶ which break down as follows: one involving money;⁷ one example each of Persian and Greek troop numbers;⁸ one Persian fleet and three Greek fleets;⁹ four measurements of

⁶ See App. 5.1 for a tabulation of all these cases.

⁷ The revenues of the Persian Empire—Hdt. 3.89–95.

⁸ Xerxes' invasion force—Hdt. 7.184–6; the Greek army at Plataea—Hdt. 9.28–40.

⁹ Xerxes' fleet—Hdt. 7.89–95; the Ionian fleet at Miletus—Hdt. 6.8.1–2; the Greek fleets at Artemisium and Salamis—Hdt. 8.1–2 and 8.42–8.

distance;¹⁰ and three calculations of lengthy periods of time.¹¹ For Thucydides his selection of passages is slightly larger, comprising fifteen cases where he thinks the historian could and should have offered a calculation. These break down as follows: four relating to sums of money;¹² five involving troop numbers and casualties;¹³ and six involving naval forces.¹⁴ He also discusses more summarily Thucydides' measurements of distance and periods of time.¹⁵

In his examination of these data, Keyser certainly demonstrates that Herodotus liked to make, and to display for his readers' admiration, arithmetical calculations, most of which are correct, and he reiterates the cogent argument he had made in an earlier article (Keyser 1986) that Herodotus 'gives evidence of being familiar with the operation of an abacus . . . , as well as with the "acrophonic" numeral system' (Keyser 2006, 337). He further demonstrates that Thucydides, by contrast, makes no such display of calculations involving numbers, and that in many cases the numerical data he supplies are not complete enough to make possible such a calculus.

What are we to make of this argument? Keyser's demonstration that Herodotus liked to display arithmetical calculations is convincing, and his suggestion that Thucydides did not share this arithmetical enthusiasm may well be correct. Must one necessarily accept, however, the conclusion he draws about the reasons for this difference in numeric practice, namely, that Herodotus treated numbers more 'rationally' than Thucydides did? I would prefer to attribute the difference between the two historians' numeric practice

¹⁰ The dimensions of Alyattes' tomb—Hdt. 1.93.5; the distances between major points on the journey up the Nile—Hdt. 2.9.2 and 2.29–30; the dimensions of the Black Sea—Hdt. 4.86.1–3; the length of the Royal Road—Hdt. 5.52–4.

¹¹ The regnal years of the Lydian kings—Hdt. 1.7.4; the days of a human life—Hdt. 1.32.2–4; the years of Egyptian rule—Hdt. 2.142.1–2.

¹² Tissaphernes' payment for ships at Miletus—Thuc. 8.29.3; Pericles' account of Athenian money resources in 431—Thuc. 2.13.3–9; reported ransom for Corcyraean prisoners—Thuc. 3.70.1; fine imposed for violation of the Olympic truce—Thuc. 5.49.1.

¹³ The battle of Mantinea—Thuc. 5.68.1–2 and 5.74; Athenian hoplite forces in 431—Thuc. 2.13.6; 1.61.4 and 2.31.2; 1.64.2; Brasidas' forces at Megara in 424—Thuc. 4.70.1 and 4.72.1–2; the siege of Plataea—Thuc. 2.78.3; 3.20.2; 3.24.2; 3.68.2–3; Athenian and allied troops sent to Sicily—Thuc. 6.43 and 6.98.

¹⁴ The Corcyraean coastguard—Thuc. 3.77–80; Athenian and Spartan fleets at Pylos—Thuc. 4.2.2–23.2, *passim*; the Syracusan fleet—Thuc. 7.21.2–52.1, *passim*; the Athenian fleet in Sicily—Thuc. 7.37.3–70.4, *passim*; Spartan fleet at Chios—Thuc. 8.7–26; fleets at Miletus and Cynossema—Thuc. 8.99–104, *passim*.

¹⁵ Keyser (2006), 347–8.

to the significant difference in authorial persona between them. Herodotus habitually reports variant versions of the history he is narrating, and engages his readers in conversation about their relative plausibility. On one occasion (7.152.3) he makes the famous policy statement, 'I must say what has been told to me, but I do not at all have to believe it, and let this statement hold for the whole *logos*'; elsewhere he sometimes, but by no means always, endorses one version as more plausible, giving his reasons for preferring it.¹⁶ Thucydides, on the other hand, rarely acknowledges explicitly the many contradictory testimonia which he mentions in his methodological chapters (1.20–2), but merely presents to his readers his judgement, based on his own sifting of the evidence, of what is most likely to be the true version of events.¹⁷ Whereas earlier commentators tended to treat such remarks by Herodotus as evidence simply of his straightforward and honest nature, more recently narratological studies have encouraged us to see them as an important element in the strategy by which Herodotus adds to the authority of his authorial persona. Carolyn Dewald argues:

The persona that emerges . . . has gone to the trouble of collecting, testing, and recording *logoi*—but he does not want us, his readers, to forget the difficulties of his task. Hence he has not tried, as historians after him were to do, to make the narrative surface of the *Histories* a smooth one, or to use his own voice as author to confirm the authority of the third-person narrative. (Dewald 1987, 153)

John Marincola attributes this to the sensitivity Herodotus felt about possible challenges to the authority of his narrative:

[H]e was working in a new tradition—no longer the poetic with its guarantees of validity from the Muse. His solution was a constant stream of comment that represents a pervasive concern with obviating any doubts that might arise: Herodotus seems to assume that the

¹⁶ Dewald (1987) discusses this aspect of Herodotus' narrative style very thoroughly, making comparisons with Thucydides at intervals.

¹⁷ Hornblower (1996) remarks on the mention of the discrepant accounts of Thebans and Plataeans at Thuc. 2.5.6: 'This is a very interesting and unusual instance where Th. gives two versions of the same event. Moreover he makes no attempt at adjudication. (Hdt. often does both.)' Hornblower (1987), 155–6 makes the general observation that Thucydides differs significantly from Herodotus (as well as other famous ancient historians) in the rarity with which he 'admits to outright uncertainty' and 'offers alternative accounts without adjudication'; he also discusses the few exceptions.

question, 'How do you know', is constantly on his audience's mind. His solution was to place himself, if not front and centre, then in a constant and direct relationship with his material, ensuring that he, the narrator, was recognized as the medium, the authority, through which the deeds became known and celebrated. (Marincola 1997, 8)

Marincola characterizes the contrasting persona of Thucydides thus:

This narrator, although like Herodotus, a controlling intelligence, intrudes only briefly upon the narrative, and even these intrusions are nearly exclusively in digressions. . . . The narrative homogeneity of Thucydides is meant to inspire confidence; he does not, like Herodotus, want the emphasis to be on his tracking down of sources, but on the finished product: the reader is to be concerned not with the process of research, but rather with the result. (Marincola 1997, 7–8)¹⁸

So much for the general argument against Keyser's inference that, if Thucydides did not make a practice of displaying calculations involving his numerical data, that must be because he was unable to make such calculations and uninterested in doing so. What evidence is there that he did add up the detailed numbers in any narrative and try to make them compute? The best evidence is in two of the cases cited by Keyser: the account of Brasidas' forces at Megara in 424, and the details concerning the garrison besieged in Plataea.¹⁹

In the former case, Thucydides supplies specific numbers for four of the five contingents of troops that made up Brasidas' force: 2,700 Corinthian hoplites, 400 Phleasians, 600 Sicyonians, and 2,200 Boeotian hoplites. The first three numbers are given at 4.70.1, where Thucydides also mentions an unnumbered fifth contingent of 'his [i.e. Brasidas'] own men, as many as had been collected together by this time'. Two chapters later, after reporting the arrival of the fourth contingent, he sums up, ' . . . his whole force was now present, [numbering] not less than 6,000 hoplites' (Thuc. 4.72.2). The specified hoplite contingents have been added, correctly, to make up 5,900 men, but the historian appears to have remembered that he

¹⁸ Keyser's description (2006, 346) of Herodotus' purpose in setting out his calculations concerning the revenues of the Persian Empire (Hdt. 3.89–95—'to demonstrate the awesome resources of the Persians') and the numbers of troops who accompanied Xerxes (Hdt. 8.184–6—'to confirm the huge size of the hostile numbers') seems more in line with the emotional use of numbers that he attributes to Thucydides.

¹⁹ Brasidas' forces at Megara in 424—Thuc. 4.70.1 and 4.72.1–2; the besieged Plataean garrison: Thuc. 2.78.3; 3.20.2; 3.24.2; 3.68.2–3.

was unable to get a precise number for the contingent of Brasidas' own men, and so he rounds up 5,900 to 6,000 and qualifies this total with an expression of the kind that indicates that the actual total, which he cannot give precisely, was somewhat above that.²⁰ This is a perfectly rational way of dealing with incomplete information, and the judicious use of a qualifier with an estimated total is a technique that Thucydides frequently employs to indicate the degree of confidence he has in a particular number, while minimizing his authorial intrusion into the narrative.²¹

In the case of the Plataean garrison, we have a more complex sequence of narrative, spread across four passages in two books, describing the initial complement of the garrison, the mass break-out by about half of them, and the slaughter and enslavement of those finally forced to surrender to the Peloponnesian army. Keyser admits that 'the account of the besieged Plataeans . . . can be reconciled', but is reluctant to believe that Thucydides attempted any such reconciliation on the ground that he 'does not gather his figures or clarify them by any calculation', so that we are left to discover for ourselves that 'about 40 men are "missing", presumably casualties of the initial assault' (Keyser 2006, 339).

The question becomes, then, whether it is appropriate to apply expectations based on modern numeric practice to an ancient author. More specifically, Keyser seems to assume that any historian, ancient or modern, should be expected to provide a complete and explicit record of every numeric calculation in his narrative. My comparisons of ancient and modern narratives of the same events, however, have found evidence of some significant differences. Modern narratives have a higher overall frequency of numbers, doubtless due to the much easier accessibility of quantified information in all subject areas, and to the higher expectations for numeric information generated by this accessibility. Evidence for this came clearly to light in a recent comparative study that focused on a few sections of numeric information in Herodotus' narrative of the Salamis campaign (book 8).²² In this study each excerpt from Herodotus' Greek text is juxtaposed with two different modern

²⁰ This interpretation was advanced in Rubincam (1979a), 84 and n. 29.

²¹ For examples of this see Rubincam (1979a).

²² Rubincam (2008a).

translations of each passage, and three modern retellings of the episode in question.²³

Of the four Herodotean passages selected here, two contain numbers in the subject category *TIME* (of months in one case and days in the other), one passage numbers relating to *DISTANCE*, and one numbers relating to *MONEY*. Note particularly that even the translators sometimes insert numbers that are not in the Greek text, apparently from a compulsion to make complete and explicit calculations that Herodotus left incomplete. Thus the first *TIME* passage from Herodotus (Hdt. 8.51) supplies two numbers ('one month' and 'three other months'—both cardinals, without qualification) for the duration, respectively, of Xerxes' crossing of the Hellespont and his subsequent march to Athens. Whereas one of the translators (de Sélincourt) renders these numbers as in the original Greek text (although in the reverse order), the other (Rawlinson) adds them up, so as to produce a third number ('a space of four months') in addition to Herodotus' two. Each of the two modern historians who treat this subject (Sealey omits it) gives only one number: Grote gives the total ('four months') obtained by adding together Herodotus' two numbers, and Green a rhetorically qualified version of Herodotus' figure for the march from the Hellespont to Athens ('*only* three months'). The second *TIME* passage (Hdt. 8.66.1), specifying two periods of three days for the stages in Xerxes' advance upon Athens, is rendered faithfully by both translations. All three of the modern narratives, however, show their authors' efforts to create a more complete chronology for Xerxes' march based on different interpretations of Herodotus' numbers: thus Grote has only one number, whereas Green has eight, and Sealey four. Green's enormous expansion of the numbers in this passage (from two to eight) results from his desire to map his reconstruction of Xerxes' march onto the modern Western calendar, so that he adds Julio-Gregorian calendar dates to Herodotus' indications of duration.²⁴ The passages containing *DISTANCE* and *MONEY* numbers (Hdt. 8.8.2 [the prodigious underwater swim of Scyllias] and 8.4.2–5.2 [bribery of and by Themistocles]) show the tendency of both translators and modern narrators of these famous events to insert conversions of distance

²³ A selection of these comparisons is presented in App. 5.2. The translations used for this comparison are de Sélincourt (1954) and Rawlinson (1942); the modern retellings are Green (1970), Grote (1918), and Sealey (1976).

²⁴ See Rubincam (2008b, esp. 319–21).

measurements and sums of money into comparable, but more comprehensible, modern units (*stades* into miles or kilometres; talents into modern currency). These conversions inevitably inflate the number of quantified units in the narrative. The effects of this quantitative inflation on Herodotus' story of Themistocles' bribery are particularly remarkable.

Comparative studies of this type heighten one's awareness of the enormous differences in the process of counting and measuring all sorts of aspects of life that separate us from ancient writers. Not only the counting and measuring of things but also the preservation and communication of numerical information are infinitely easier for us than for Herodotus and Thucydides. It would be surprising if these changes had not heightened modern expectations concerning the amounts and kinds of quantification to be expected in a historical narrative.

To sum up so far, Keyser presents a wealth of evidence that Herodotus liked to display facility in arithmetical calculation, which is lacking for Thucydides. This difference could be explained, however, as an element in the different authorial personae of the two historians. There is evidence that Thucydides probably did make calculations in some cases, even though he felt no compulsion to dot every 'i' and cross every 't', or to set out the calculations for his reader.

The case where Keyser criticizes Thucydides most severely for providing incomplete numeric information concerns the troop and casualty numbers in the battle of Mantinea.²⁵ Here is what he says:

For the battle of Mantinea, he [Thucydides] indicates that it is possible to calculate to find out . . . the number of Spartans present, but admits that because of the lack of data he cannot give the number precisely. . . . The Mantinean line [i.e., the line of the Peloponnesian forces at Mantinea] was 'for the most part eight deep,' and Thucydides has its length very precisely as 448, yet he does not multiply to estimate the total present. . . . He gives the number of their dead as 'about' (*περί*) 300, emphasizing that it is difficult to learn the truth . . . Moreover, the account of the enemy Argive forces only reveals the number of their dead by contingent. . . . Without the original size of their forces, we can make no rational evaluation of the numbers, but can only be irrationally impressed by their magnitude. (Keyser 2006, 338)

²⁵ Battle of Mantinea, troop and casualty numbers—Thuc. 5.68.1–2 and 5.74.

Keyser's complaint is twofold: first, that in regard to the troop numbers on the Peloponnesian side, Thucydides sets out the means by which a total figure could be calculated, but declines to make this calculation, and second, that in describing the anti-Spartan alliance, he gives no troop numbers with which the numbers of dead from each contingent can be compared. All modern editors and commentators would no doubt echo the first complaint, as they all rush to make the calculation that Thucydides sets up but declines to complete,²⁶ arriving at a total of around 4,000 hoplites—and then to argue about the problems involved in reconciling Thucydides' description of the Spartan army organization with that given by Xenophon (*Lac. Pol.* 11.4). Gomme offers the following explanation for Thucydides' treatment of these numbers:

The answer must be, that he had been able to get some precise information about the organization of the Spartan army, but was not sure that 4,000 was the (approximately) accurate figure for the total at Mantinea . . . ; when he enquired further, one may suppose,—‘so that would make, would it not? with the usual age-groups called up for foreign service, *πανστρατιᾶ*, something more than 4,000 hoplites?’—silence fell, and he got no more. . . . (Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover 1970, *ad loc.*)

Provided one can set aside the automatic assumption that a historian is bound to do what Herodotus did, namely, extrapolate from the numbers he was given by his informants so as to expand the available numeric information, this explanation seems entirely convincing. As for the second complaint, why the reluctance to accept that Thucydides could not always get every piece of information he wanted? We know very little about the process by which he composed his narrative. He says (1.1.1) he began putting together his account of ‘the war of the Peloponnesians and Athenians’ immediately at its commencement (*εὐθὺς καθισταμένου*), but no one, surely, believes that the record he began keeping early in 431 bc was much like the full literary narrative that now stands at the start of book 2. The first stage must have been something of a summary memoir, incorporating his notes on the events he had witnessed, as well as the results of his questioning of other witnesses. What interval elapsed before he embarked on the process of turning that skeletal record

²⁶ See the discussions of Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1970) and Hornblower (1996), *ad loc.*

into the full literary narrative we cannot tell; it may have varied in different parts of the war. But in any case, it is likely enough that, when he came to write up his notes into something fuller, after an interval of perhaps some years, he came up against some gaps in his information which he had difficulty filling, because of problems in getting access to his sources (original or supplementary). A historian facing such a difficulty would have to make a choice: should he extrapolate, as Herodotus sometimes did, by calculation on the basis of the numerical information about which he felt reasonably certain, or should he refrain from venturing onto such hypothetical territory?²⁷

Let us try to see inside the mind of Thucydides, as he was setting out to write history. There can be no doubt that he knew Herodotus' *Histories* very thoroughly, as well as other, now lost, works—even though we can only speculate about how he got access to them²⁸—and thought deeply about how to stake out his claim to excellence in this new genre of prose literature. He chose for his subject a war that was happening in his own lifetime, in which he must have expected to have to serve, as cavalryman, if not as general. This decision was surely designed to obviate some of the problems Herodotus had had in obtaining accurate and precise information from informants a generation removed from the events he was chronicling; and Herodotus almost certainly lacked the experience of combat and command which must have contributed to Thucydides' sharpness in extracting information from his informants. Even though he nowhere explicitly criticizes the results of Herodotus' calculations, might he not have found Xerxes' 50-myrriad-strong invasion force hard to credit? The scenario imagined by Gomme (above) in connection with the Mantinea numbers suggests a deliberate policy decision to report as much numerical information as he had been able to obtain from his informants, even if its usefulness was limited by

²⁷ Scholarship on Thucydides' process of composing his work is discussed summarily in Hornblower (1987), 136–54, and in more detail by Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1970), *ad* 5.26.6; *id.* (1981), 1–4 and 361–444; Hornblower (1996), 107–22; *id.* (2008), 1–4 and 41–57.

²⁸ Given the dearth of reliable biographical information about fifth-century historians, and the fluidity of the processes of dissemination of literary works at that time, many scenarios are possible. Thucydides' sharp criticism of Hellanicus at 1.97.2 is, of course, the only explicit indication of acquaintance with the works of contemporary historians, but his familiarity with Herodotus' work can hardly be doubted (see Hornblower 1996, 122–35).

incompleteness, but not to build beyond this by extrapolation. We can see this most clearly in the Mantinea narrative, but such a policy would also explain the many cases Keyser assembles of incomplete numerical information regarding naval forces.²⁹

At various points in his discussion of the fourteen passages of impressive calculation in Herodotus, Keyser deplores the tendency of many previous editors and commentators to focus attention on either the errors in, or the unbelievable results of, Herodotus' arithmetic.³⁰ His desire to redress the balance so that these negative points do not detract from the arithmetical facility and enthusiasm displayed by Herodotus is entirely understandable. But is it not legitimate to question the rationality of engaging in virtuoso displays of calculation on the abacus without asking whether the results are worthy of belief? The numeric practice I have hypothesized above for Thucydides could surely be seen as the rational response of a historian who had read and absorbed the lessons of Herodotean historiography, and wanted to avoid what he regarded as some of its riskier processes ('garbage in—garbage out!').³¹

In conclusion, I would argue that we need to remember always how much more difficult it was for ancient historians than it is for us today to obtain precise and accurate numerical information. This will both save us from applying to them anachronistic expectations about numeric practice, and sharpen our perception of the carefully

²⁹ Sumner (1961), n. 46 suggests that a similar unwillingness to put forward as authoritative the results of a historian's own chronological calculations can be seen in the Aristotelian *Constitution of Athens*. He suggests as an explanation for some of the irregularities in the naming of archons in that work's Peisistratid narrative the author's scrupulousness in distinguishing between quantified indications of time for which he had actual chronographic authority and those that rested purely on his own calculations. See Rubincam (1979b), 305.

³⁰ Keyser (2006), 346: 'The error in the calculation [sc., of the revenue from all the Persian satrapies, at Hdt. 3.89–95] has distracted scholars from taking Herodotos' evidence seriously'; and again, '[I]n another long and correct addition (followed by a division error), Herodotos accounts for the Persian troops that marched on Greece (7.184–6), where again scholars concentrate on refuting the magnitudes. . . . The size of the results has dissuaded scholars from taking Herodotos' account seriously.' Elsewhere he himself characterizes Herodotus' numbers as 'more often precise than accurate' (2006), 336.

³¹ Hornblower (1987), 108–9 deplores Thucydides' failure to criticize the exaggerated numbers of Persian troops which Herodotus had attributed to Xerxes. This chapter has suggested that Thucydides chose a less direct and explicit method of criticizing Herodotus' use of numbers. For further discussion of numeric practice as an element of historiography in which Greek historians show many individual variations, see App. 5.3.

nuanced policy Thucydides adopted, in passing on the information from sources of varying quality, as he carved out for himself a historiographic position in reaction to other contemporary practitioners of this new genre of literature.

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APPENDIX 5.1

Numeric Passages in Herodotus discussed by Keyser

Subject	Reference	Nature of Calculation	Keyser's Comments
Revenues of Persian Empire	Hdt. 3.89–95	Totals of 20 satrapies each converted into common currency unit (Euboean talents) and summed	‘The calculation, the most complex in Herodotus, and far more complex than any in Thucydides, has somehow gone astray. But that does not obviate Herodotus’ purpose, to demonstrate the awesome resources of the Persians, which being extraordinary require extraordinary evidence, and as well to demonstrate how well informed is Herodotus’ (Keyser 2006, 346).
Troops of Xerxes’ invasion force	Hdt. 7.184–6	Totals of men serving in different parts of invasion force listed and summed	‘Another long and correct calculation (followed by a division error)’; ‘again scholars concentrate on refuting the magnitudes’; ‘Herodotus sought to confirm the huge size of the hostile forces, by showing how carefully he had considered the data’; ‘The size of the results has dissuaded scholars from taking Herodotus’ account seriously, and so they miss his message, which includes praise for the enemy leader, Xerxes, as the best of all that host (7.187.2)’ (Keyser 2006, 346).
Greek army at Plataea	Hdt. 9.28–40	Totals of contingents contributed by different Greek states listed in description of battle order, and then summed	‘Another troop account is similar [sc., to that of Xerxes’ invasion force]’ (Keyser 2006, 346).
Four fleets enumerated		In each case totals of different contingents listed and summed	‘Criticizing Herodotus’ facts should not entail mistaking his position—he aims to give a consistent account that his readers can verify’ (Keyser 2006, 346).
• Xerxes’ fleet	Hdt. 7.89–95		Discussed by Keyser (2006, 346).
• Ionian fleet at Miletus	Hdt. 6.8.1–2		Discussed by Keyser (2006, 346).

Subject	Reference	Nature of Calculation	Keyser's Comments
• Greek fleet at Artemisium	Hdt. 8.1–2		Discussed by Keyser (2006, 346)
• Greek fleet at Salamis	Hdt. 8.42–8		Discussed by Keyser (2006, 346).
Distance calculations:			'Herodotus, unlike Thucydides, makes calculations of distances' (Keyser 2006, 347).
• Alyattes' tomb	Hdt. 1.93.5	• Perimeter and diameter measurements given in <i>plethra</i>	Discussed by Keyser (2006, 347).
• Distances between major points up the Nile in Egypt	Hdt. 2.9.2 and 2.29–30	• Distances given in days of sailing, and both <i>stades</i> and <i>schoinoi</i> of road travel	Discussed by Keyser (2006, 347).
• Size of Black Sea	Hdt. 4.86.1–3	• Distances given in days and nights of sailing and in <i>orgyiai</i>	Discussed by Keyser (2006, 347).
• Length of Persian Royal Road	Hdt. 5.52–4	• Length of each stage given in <i>stathmoi</i> , <i>stades</i> , and <i>parasangs</i> ; totals of each summed for overall totals	Discussed by Keyser (2006, 347).
Calculations of lengthy periods of time			'In all these cases, scholars have concentrated on criticizing Herodotus' data—which they are able to do in part because he has been generous in supplying it' (Keyser 2006, 347).
• Lydian kings	Hdt. 1.7.4	• Duration of rule given in both generations and years	Discussed by Keyser (2006, 347).
• Days of human life	Hdt. 1.32.2–4	• Total number of days in 70 years calculated by conversion into months	Discussed by Keyser (2006, 347).
• Years of Egyptian rule	Hdt. 2.142.1–2	• Generations converted into years	Discussed by Keyser (2006, 347).

Numeric Passages in Thucydides discussed by Keyser

Subject	Reference	Nature of Calculation	Keyser's Comments
Four accounts of costs			
• Tissaphernes' payment for ships at Miletus	Thuc. 8.29.1–2	Numbers given: 3 talents per month for 55 ships	'Emendation is generally resorted to, but even so, the numbers do not tally. What is notable is that Thucydides does not explain the numbers in any way, e.g., by giving a calculation' (Keyser 2006, 337). ^a
• Pericles' account of Athenian resources of money and men	Thuc. 2.13.3–9	5 sums mentioned (in talents) of money available to finance war	'Likewise, reporting Perikles' account of the Athenian resources of money and men, Thucydides fails to analyze either column of figures. . . . That is, he omits precisely what is needed to comprehend the rational meaning of the figures reported, and we are left with a spectacle, like a procession, serving to gladden the heart . . . ' (Keyser 2006, 337).
• Ransom for Corcyraean prisoners	Thuc. 3.70.1 (cf. 1.55.1)	Ransom given as 800 talents; number of prisoners not given here	'[Thucydides] omits the number of men ransomed (it was 250: see 1.55.1), while offering the impossibly-large value of 800 talents' (Keyser 2006, 337). ^b
• Fine for violation of Olympic truce	Thuc. 5.49.1	Fine given as 2,000 talents; number of those fined not given	'[A] fine of 2000 talents . . . omits the number of hoplites fined' (Keyser 2006, 337). ^c
Troop numbers			
• Troops and casualties in battle of Mantinea	Thuc. 5.68.1–2 and 5.74	Specific numbers given for some contingents' troops and casualties	'For the battle of Mantinea, he indicates that it is possible to calculate to find out . . . the number of Spartans present, but admits that because of the lack of data he cannot give the number precisely. . . . The Mantinean line was "for the most part eight deep," and Thucydides has its length very precisely as 448, yet he does not multiply to estimate the total present. . . . He gives the number of their dead as "about" . . . 300, emphasizing that it is difficult to learn the truth. . . . [As for the anti-Spartan alliance,] [W]ithout the original size of their forces, we can make no rational evaluation of the numbers, but can only be irrationally impressed by their magnitude' (Keyser 2006, 338).

Subject	Reference	Nature of Calculation	Keyser's Comments
• Athenian hoplite forces in 431	Thuc. 2.13.6; 1.61.4 and 2.31.2; 1.64.2	Numbers deployed on several expeditions do not perfectly correspond with Pericles' list of available troops	Discussed by Keyser (2006, 338).
• Brasidas' forces at Megara in 424	Thuc. 4.70.1 and 4.72.1–2	Specific numbers given for 4 of 5 contingents; total qualified as 'not less than' 6,000 hoplites	Discussed by Keyser (2006, 338–9).
• Besieged Plataean garrison	Thuc. 2.78.3; 3.20.2; 3.24.2; 3.68.2–3	Specific numbers given for original garrison, those who broke out, and those killed and enslaved at end of siege	'Although the account of the besieged Plataians . . . can be reconciled, Thucydides does not gather his figures or clarify them by any calculation. . . . [When reconciliation of these numbers is attempted,] [e]vidently about 40 men are "missing", presumably casualties of the initial assaults. At each stage of the narrative Thucydides is concerned to convey a momentary impression, not to account for all the men and women involved' (Keyser 2006, 339).
• Athenian and allied troops sent to Sicily	Thuc. 6.43 and 6.98	Specific numbers given for total of Athenian hoplites but only some of allied forces; also for Athenian cavalry	'No rational picture useful for understanding can be formed of the force, for we know neither the whole composition of the hoplites . . . nor the total of the auxiliary forces. In 6.98, describing the Athenian cavalry, critical for the impending narrative about the attempted circumvallation of Syracuse, he offers an account that does reconcile' (Keyser 2006, 339).
Ship numbers:		In all these cases modern commentators cannot make calculation work out perfectly	
• Corcyraean coastguard	Thuc. 3.77–80	Specific numbers given for original size, losses by desertion and capture, and remainder	'Readers can invent plausible explanations for the 15 others [i.e., 15 ships not accounted for in Thucydides' numbers], but Thucydides never rationalizes his account' (Keyser 2006, 340).

• Athenian and Spartan fleets at Pylos	Thuc. 4.2.2–23.2, <i>passim</i>	Specific numbers given for original sizes and numerous modifications	‘Thucydides is not seeking a rational account of the battle at Pylos; he is, as he emphasizes, focused on the paradoxical and irrational character of the battle’ (Keyser 2006, 340).
• Sicilian Exped.: Syracusan fleet	Thuc. 7.21.2–52.1, <i>passim</i>	Specific numbers given for original size and numerous modifications	‘As at Pylos, so here, Thucydides’ concern is not to provide a rational account of events at Syracuse, but to stress the incalculable nature of outcomes: he explicitly compares the unexpectedness of the outcome at Pylos (7.71.7)’ (Keyser 2006, 342).
• Sicilian Exped.: Athenian fleet	Thuc. 7.37.3–70.4, <i>passim</i>	Specific numbers given for original size and numerous modifications	‘Neither does the Athenian fleet at Syracuse admit of any rational account’ (Keyser 2006, 342).
• Spartan fleet at Chios	Thuc. 8.7–26, <i>passim</i>	Specific numbers given for totals of particular expeditions and some constituents	‘The Spartan fleet operations at Chios are shrouded in similar obscurity. . . . Thucydides’ concern in narrating the revolt of Chios was not to give a clear and rational account, but to emphasize how calamitous to Athens was the Chian revolt, and how irrational its outcome’ (Keyser 2006, 343).
• Fleets at Cynossema	Thuc. 8.99–104, <i>passim</i>	Specific numbers given for original size and numerous modifications	‘[N]either the Athenian nor the Spartan numbers will tally’ (Keyser 2006, 344).

^a Emendation of *tria* to *triakonta* has been adopted by ‘most editors’ since the late 19th century (Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover 1970, *ad loc.*). Hornblower (2008, 836–8) accepts the emendation of ‘3 talents’ to ‘30 talents’ and offers a convincing explanation of the calculation.

^b Thucydides states not that the [250] men were *actually* released on a bail of 800 talents but rather that this was the story (τῶ μὲν λόγῳ), whereas in fact (ἐργῳ δέ) they were persuaded by the Corinthians to engineer a pro-Corinthian revolution in Corcyra.

^c The Greek text clearly reads δισχίλιαί μναι = ‘2000 minas’, not ‘2000 talents’.

APPENDIX 5.2

Excerpts from Herodotus book 8 compared with two translations and three modern adaptations.

(Abbreviations denote terms used in the coding system set out in full in Rubincam (2008a), 116–18 (and see footnote on p. 97 above).

Card = cardinal; Ord = ordinal; Comp = compound; Frac = fraction; Qemph = emphatic qualifier; Ø = non-explicit but definite number;

Q1 = approximating qualifier; Q2 = comparative qualifier.)

Text Excerpts	Count of Numbers
Hdt. 8.51.1 <i>Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς διαβάσιος τοῦ Ἑλλησπόντου, ἔνθεν πορεύεσθαι ἤρξαντο οἱ βάρβαροι, ἔνα αὐτοῦ διατρίψαντες μῆνα {Card, TIME} ἐν τῷ διέβαινον ἐς τὴν Εὐρώπην, ἐν τρισὶ ἐτέροισι μῆσι {Card, TIME} ἐγένοντο ἐν τῇ Ἀττικῇ, Καλλιάδεω ἀρχοντος Ἀθηναίοισι.</i> <i>Translation by G. Rawlinson (1942)</i> Since the passage of the Hellespont and the commencement of the march upon Greece, a space of four months {Card, TIME} had gone by; one {Card, TIME} while the army made the crossing, and delayed about the region of the Hellespont; and three {Card, TIME} while they proceeded thence to Attica, which they entered in the archonship of Calliades. <i>Translation by A. de Selincourt (1954)</i> The march of the Persian army from the Hellespont to Attica had taken three months {Card, TIME}—and the actual crossing of the strait an additional one {Card, TIME}; it reached Attica during the magistracy of Calliades. <i>Grote (1918), 225</i> Four months {Card, TIME} had elapsed, since the departure from Asia, when Xerxes reached Athens, the last term of his advance. <i>Green (1970), 166</i> His [Xerxes'] march from the Dardanelles to Athens had taken him <i>only three months</i> {TIME, Card, Qemph}. <i>Sealey (1976)</i> Does not give this figure.	• TIME—2 × Card • TIME—3 × Card • TIME—2 × Card • TIME—1 × Card • TIME—1 × Card (1 × Qemph) • TIME—2 × Card
Hdt. 8.66.1 <i>Οἱ δὲ ἐς τὸν Εὐρῆεω ναυτικὸν στρατὸν ταχθέντες, ἐπειδὴ ἐκ Τρηγῆνος θεησάμενοι τὸ τῶμα τὸ Λακωνικὸν διέβησαν ἐς τὴν Ἰσθμίαν, ἐπισχόντες ἡμέρας τρεῖς {Card, TIME} ἔπλεον δι' Εὐρίπου, καὶ ἐν ἐτέρῃσι τρισὶ ἡμέρησι {Card, TIME} ἐγένοντο ἐν Φαλήρῳ.</i>	• TIME—2 × Card

Translation by G. Rawlinson (1942)

The men belonging to the fleet of Xerxes, after they had seen the Spartan dead at Thermopylae, and crossed the channel from Trachis to Histiaea, waited there **for three days** {Card, TIME}, and then sailing down through the Euripus, **in three more** {Card, TIME} came to Phalerum.

- TIME—2 × Card

Translation by A. de Sélincourt (1954)

Meanwhile the Persian sailors had returned from Trachis to Histiaea after their sight-seeing tour of the battlefield, and **three days later** {Card, TIME} the fleet set sail. The ships passed through the Euripus, and **in another three days** {Card, TIME} arrived off Phalerum.

- TIME—2 × Card

Grote (1918), 217

We may conceive the state of tumult and terror which followed on this unexpected proclamation [*sc.*, that ‘every Athenian . . . remove his family out of the country in the best way he could’], when we reflect that it had to be circulated and acted upon throughout all Attica, from Sunium to Orôpus, **within the narrow space of less than six days** {Card, TIME, Q2}; for no longer interval elapsed before Xerxes actually arrived at Athens.

- TIME—1 × Card
(1 × Q2)

Green (1970), 154–5

At dawn next morning (21 August) {Ord, TIME} the whole Persian fleet moved across to the Greek station [at Artemisium], where they remained till midday. . . . All next day (22 August) {Ord, TIME} parties of sailors/and marines . . . potted about in the Hot Gates. . . . Next day (23 August) {Ord, TIME} these boatloads of visitors returned to Histiaea, and the main body of the army began its march from Thermopylae down into central Greece. . . . The fleet was sent orders to delay its advance until **the 26th** {Ord, TIME}. . . . A **three-day gap** {Comp, TIME} was just about right, provided no unforeseen delays took place: ancient tradition allowed **a day** {Ø, TIME} and **a half** {Frac, TIME} for the journey from Thermopylae to Thebes . . . , and *roughly* **the same** {Comp, TIME, Q1} for that between Thebes and Athens.

- TIME—4 × Ord; 2 × Comp (1 × Q1); 1 × Frac; 1 × Ø

Sealey (1976), 213

The duration of the Persian march by land to Athens can be calculated from the movements of the fleet. On the day after the battles of Artemisium and Thermopylae the Persian fleet sailed at dawn to Artemisium and stayed there until noon; then it sailed to Histiaea, the northernmost city of Euboea, and seized it. On the next day in response to an invitation from Xerxes the crews went to Thermopylae and inspected the corpses, and on the day after that they returned to Histiaea. Then the fleet waited **for three days** {Card, TIME} and **in the course of three further days** {Card, TIME} it sailed through the Euripus to the Bay of Phalerum. Thus **nine days passed** {Card, TIME} between the end of the fighting at Artemisium and the arrival of the fleet at Phalerum. Evidently Xerxes wanted part at least of his army to secure Athens ahead of the fleet, so that the ships would find a friendly shore at Phalerum; this explains why the fleet waited **for three days** {Card, TIME} at Histiaea.

- TIME—4 × Card

Text Excerpts	Count of Numbers
<i>Sealey (1976), 216</i> After the battle [of Artemisium], as Persian forces approached Attica, the Athenians had <i>less than nine days</i> {Card, TIME, Q2} to evacuate an enormous mass of noncombatants.	• TIME—1 × Card (1 × Q2)
<i>Hdt. 8.8.2</i> <i>Ὅτεω μὲν δὴ τρώπω τὸ ἐνθεῦτεν ἔτι ἀπίκητο ἐς τοὺς Ἑλλήνας, οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν ἀτρεκέως, θωμάζω δὲ εἰ τὰ λεγόμενά ἐστι ἀληθέα· λέγεται γάρ ὡς ἐξ Ἀφετῶν δὺς ἐς τὴν θάλασσαν οὐ πρότερον ἀνέσχε πρὶν ἢ ἀπίκητο ἐπὶ τὸ Ἀρτεμίσιον, σταδίους μάλιστά κη τούτους ἐς ὀγδῶκοντα [Card, DIST, Q1[×3]] διὰ τῆς θαλάσσης διεξελθών. Λέγεται μὲν νυν καὶ ἄλλα ψευδέσι ἵκελα περὶ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς τούτου, τὰ δὲ μετεξέτερα ἀληθέα· περὶ μέντοι τούτου γνώμη μοι ἀποδεδέχθω πλοίω μιν ἀπικέσθαι ἐπὶ τὸ Ἀρτεμίσιον.</i>	• DIST—1 × Card (3 × Q1)
<i>Translation by G. Rawlinson (1942)</i> In what way he contrived to reach the Greeks I am not able to say for certain: I marvel much if the tale that is commonly told be true. It is said he dived into the sea at Aphetæ, and did not once come to the surface till he reached Artemisium, a distance of <i>nearly ten miles</i> {Card, DIST, Q1}. Now many things are related of this man which are plainly false, but some of the stories seem to be true. My own opinion is that on this occasion he made the passage to Artemisium in a boat.	• DIST—1 × Card (1 × Q1)
<i>Translation by A. de Sélincourt (1954)</i> I cannot say for certain how it was that he managed to reach the Greeks, and the commonly accepted account is, at the least, doubtful; for, according to this, he dived under water at Aphetæ and did not come up until he reached Artemisium—a distance of <i>about ten miles</i> {Card, DIST, Q1}. There are other somewhat tall stories, besides this, told about Scyllias—and also a few true ones; as to the one I have just related, my personal opinion is that he came to Artemisium in a boat.	• DIST—1 × Card (1 × Q1)
<i>Grote (1918)</i> Does not mention this episode.	
<i>Green (1970), 130–1</i> Early the next day [17 August] {Ord, TIME} there arrived in Artemisium a professional diver named Scyllias, who had either swum or rowed across from Aphetæ under cover of darkness. . . . To ingratiate himself with the Greek commanders he let it be known that he and his daughter had been a fathom or two down during the storm, busy cutting Persian anchor-cables—a tale which Themistocles doubtless took with a good pinch of Attic salt, but no more startling than the diver's claim to have swum <i>the ten miles</i> {Card, DIST} from Aphetæ without once surfacing.	• DIST—1 × Card • TIME—1 × Ord

Sealey (1976), 210

The location of Aphetae has been disputed, but the clearest indication is Herodotus’s statement (8.82) that it was **ten miles** {Card, DIST} from the beach of Artemisium.

• DIST—1 × Card

Hdt. 8.4.2–5.2

*Γινόντες δὲ σφῆας οἱ Εὐβοεῖς ταῦτα βουλευομένους ἐδέοντο Εὐρυβιάδῃ προσμεῖναι χρόνον ὀλίγον, ἔστ’ ἂν αὐτοὶ τέκνα τε καὶ τοὺς οἰκέτας ὑπεκθῶνται. Ὡς δ’ οὐκ ἔπειθον, μεταβάντες τὸν Ἀθηναίων στρατηγὸν πείθουσι Θεμιστοκλέα ἐπὶ μισθῷ **τρήκοντα τάλαντοις** {Card, MON}, ἐπ’ ᾧ τε καταμείναντες πρὸ τῆς Εὐβοίης ποιήσονται τὴν ναυμαχίην. Ὁ δὲ Θεμιστοκλῆς τοὺς Ἑλλήνας ἐπισχεῖν ὥδε ποιεῖ. Εὐρυβιάδῃ τούτων τῶν χρημάτων μεταδίδοι **πέντε τάλαντα** {Card, MON} ὡς παρ’ ἑωυτοῦ δῆθεν διδούς. . . . / πρὸς δὲ τοῦτον [Adeimantus, the Corinthian commander] εἶπε ὁ Θεμιστοκλῆς ἐπομόσας· «Οὐ σύ γε ἡμέας ἀπολείψεις, ἐπεὶ τοι ἐγὼ μέζω δῶρα δώσω ἢ βασιλεὺς ἂν τοι ὁ Μῆδων πέμψει ἀπολιπόντι τοὺς συμμάχους.» Ταῦτά τε ἅμα ἡγόρευε καὶ πέμπει ἐπὶ τὴν νέα τὴν Ἀδειμάντου **τάλαντα ἄργυρίου τρία** {Card, MON}.*

• MONEY—3 × Card

Translation by G. Rawlinson (1942)

So when the Euboeans heard what was in debate, they went to Eurybiades, and besought him to wait a few days, while they removed their children and their slaves to a place of safety. But as they found that they prevailed nothing, they left him and went to Themistocles, the Athenian commander, to whom they gave a **bribe of thirty talents** {Card, MON}, on his promise that the fleet should remain and risk a battle in defence of Euboea. And Themistocles succeeded in detaining the fleet in the way which I will now relate. He made over to Eurybiades **five talents** {Card, MON} out of the **thirty paid him** {Card, MON}, which he gave as if they came from himself. . . . Addressing himself to this man [sc. Adeimantus, the Corinthian commander], Themistocles said with an oath, ‘You forsake us? by no means! I will pay you better for remaining than the Mede would for leaving your friends’—and straightway he sent on board the ship of Adeimantus a **present of three talents of silver** {Card, MON}.

• MONEY—4 × Card

Translation by A. de Sélincourt (1954)

This greatly alarmed the Euboeans, who no sooner realized what they had in mind than they begged Eurybiades to stay at any rate long enough to allow them to move their children and servants to a place of safety. Eurybiades refused, whereupon they went to Themistocles, the Athenian commander, and by a **bribe of some £7000** {Card, MON, Q1} induced him so to arrange matters that the Greek fleet should stay and fight on the coast of Euboea. The method Themistocles adopted to attain this object was to pass on to Eurybiades, as if it were a personal present from himself, a **sixth part** {Frac, MON} of the **sum** {Ø, MON} **he had received from the Euboeans**. . . . To him [sc. Adeimantus, the Corinthian commander], therefore, Themistocles now addressed himself. ‘Never,’ he cried with an oath, ‘shall you leave us in the lurch! I will give you more for staying with us than the Persian king would ever send you if you deserted us; and without further delay he sent aboard Adeimantus’ ship **three talents of silver** {Card, MON}—**some £700** {Card, MON, Q1}.

• MONEY—3 × Card
(2 × Q1); 1 × Frac;
1 × Ø

Grote (1918), 209–10

Such was the effect of this spectacle, and the impression of their own inferiority, that they again resolved to retire without fighting, leaving the strait open and undefended. Great consternation was caused by the news of their determination among the inhabitants of Euboea, who entreated Eurybiadēs to maintain his position for a few days, until they could have time to remove their families and their property. But even such postponement was thought unsafe and was refused. He was on the point of giving orders for retreat, when the Euboeans sent their envoy Pelagon to Themistoklēs with the offer of **thirty talents** {Card, MON}, on condition that the fleet should keep its station and hazard an engagement in defence of the island. Themistoklēs employed the money adroitly and successfully, giving **five talents** {Card, MON} to Eurybiadēs, with large presents besides to the other leading chiefs. The most unmanageable among them was the Corinthian Adeimantus,—who at first threatened to depart with his own squadron alone, if the remaining Greeks were mad enough to remain. His alarm was silenced, if not tranquillised, by a **present of three talents** {Card, MON}.

• MONEY— $3 \times \text{Card}$ Green (1970), 130

A deputation of leading citizens called on the Spartan commander, begging him at least not to evacuate Artemisium until they had removed their women and children to some place of safety. Eurybiades would give them no guarantee whatsoever, so in despair they turned to Themistocles. One of their number, Pelagon, was entrusted with a massive sum of money—**thirty talents** {Card, MON}, or **over £7,000** {Card, MON, Q2}—and privately offered it all to the Athenian commander if he would, somehow<, > keep the Greek fleet *in situ*, and stave off the threat of a Persian invasion. As this was precisely what Themistocles meant to do in any case, he heard the Euboeans out sympathetically, took their money, and promised them his full support. He seems, with characteristically cynical insight, to have gauged each man's price to a nicety. **Five talents** {Card, MON}—passed on as though it were a personal gift from Themistocles himself—sufficed to bring Eurybiades round; and most of the other commanders then fell into line as well.

• MONEY— $6 \times \text{Card}$
($1 \times \text{Q2}$)

Some, however, still remained obdurate, among them the Corinthian admiral Adeimantus, who threatened to withdraw whether the others did or not. Themistocles thereupon announced that he would pay / Adeimantus more to stay and fight than Xerxes would ever give him for deserting. [There follows an anecdote from Plutarch *Them.* describing how Themistocles bribed another Athenian captain, Architeles, with **one talent** {Card, MON}] . . . **Three talents** {Card, MON}, delivered aboard Adeimantus' flagship, duly secured his cooperation. . . . At all events, Themistocles got his way, and for a very small outlay. There remained a net surplus of **twenty-one talents** {Card, MON}, the very existence of which was unknown to his fellow-commanders. Having fulfilled his part of the bargain, he now blandly pocketed this windfall himself.

Sealey (1976)

Does not mention this episode.

APPENDIX 5.3

Numeric Practice as an Important Component of Individual Historiographic Methodology

The use of numbers and quantification is an important aspect of historiography, both ancient and modern. Like other elements of historiographic practice, it was treated very differently by different historians, according to their individual situations, interests, abilities, temperaments, and ideologies. The particular difference in numeric practice discussed here between Herodotus and Thucydides—Herodotus’ tendency to set out for the reader’s attention some impressive numbers and the calculations by which he arrived at them, as compared with Thucydides’ preference for presenting what he judged was the best information he could get and avoiding further speculation—clearly coheres with the general difference in their authorial personae, as documented in recent scholarship. Other Greek historians also exhibit equally individual habits in their use of numbers, which likewise cohere with other aspects of their historiographic practice. Thus Xenophon’s general lack of interest in chronological precision is seen in (e.g.) his almost total avoidance of chronological statements using ordinal numbers of years¹—a mode of expression much used by Thucydides—ordinal numbers being inherently more precise in chronological meaning than cardinals.² Polybius is, as one might expect, fond of both ordinal statements of chronology, like Thucydides, and self-advertisement, like Herodotus, of his ability in numerical calculation.³ As for Diodorus, the relatively high frequency of

¹ *Hell.* 2.3.9 is the only case in Xenophon’s works of an explicit ordinal number applied to a year (as opposed to relative statements of time, such as τῶ δ’ ἐπὶ οὐτι ἔτει [*Xen. Hell.* 2.1.10], which occur ten times in the Xenophontic corpus). It seems to me significant that this unique occurrence of an explicit ordinal number with ἔτει is found in one of the series of chronological notes in the first two books of the *Hellenica* that are commonly athetized by editors as likely interpolations. I have commented elsewhere on another anomalous aspect of the numbers in these passages: see Rubincam (2003), 456 n. 15.

² The argument that ordinal numbers are inherently more precise in chronological meaning than cardinals is made in Rubincam (1979a), 80–1, and n. 21.

³ Polybius has eleven cases of ordinal numbers used with ἔτει. Passages like 3.39.5ff., in which he sets out most carefully the measurement of each stage of Hannibal’s march from Spain to the crossing of the Rhone, are very reminiscent of Herodotus’ number orgies.

numbers in his historical narrative is a symptom of his interest in numbers as an impressive type of detail that enhances his account of events.⁴ This is further confirmed by his unique preference for using comparative expressions (such as 'more than', 'not less than') more often than approximating expressions (such as 'about', 'approximately') to qualify his numbers, for comparative expressions add a rhetorical emphasis on how large or small the qualified number is.⁵ These are just a few examples of how these authors' numeric practice constitutes an important part of their distinctive historiographic styles.

⁴ A graph showing the frequency of numbers in four historians (including Diodorus), as well as eight works of epic poetry, is presented and discussed in Rubincam (2003), 452–3. According to these figures (based on the whole text of Thucydides and Xenophon's *Hellenica*, about half of Herodotus, and six of the fifteen complete books of Diodorus), numbers constitute a higher proportion of the text of Diodorus than of any of the other three historians used for this study.

⁵ The use of qualification with numbers is an aspect of historiographic practice that shows much individual variation: see Rubincam (1979a), (1979b), and (2003), esp. 460. An article on the unusual features of Diodorus' use of different qualifiers is currently in process of composition.

Part II

Common Themes

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Herodotus and Thucydides on Blind Decisions Preceding Military Action

Hans-Peter Stahl

Obvious differences between Herodotus and Thucydides have been stated since antiquity, the younger historian being characterized as succinct (*brevis*) and always pushing himself ahead (*semper instans sibi*), the older one seen as pleasant (*dulcis*) and expansive (*fusus*; Quint. *Inst.* 10.73; the last-mentioned features are easily widened to a blame of being loose with the truth, like the *innumerabiles fabulae* offered by a poet: Cic. *Leg.* 1.1.5). But there also are, beyond questions of style and factual accuracy, essential affinities of outlook that merit verification.

Leaving aside the wider framework within which either author ties in blind decision-making behaviour with ensuing, often deplorable, experience, I here concentrate on a detailed investigation of decision-making processes that precede military actions in both authors.

I. Thucydides:

Melos Refuses to Surrender; Athens Decides to Invade Sicily.

My examples will be King Xerxes' decision to invade Greece in Herodotus, and the Athenians' decision to invade Sicily in Thucydides. Thucydides' presentation being more concise, I offer his illustration first.

Beforehand, however, it is worth sketching what may be called the classical case of an eyes-shut decision. In 416 BC the island city of

Melos is threatened by a superior Athenian force; before any hostilities take place, its councillors are given the opportunity to consult with their attackers about the city's survival 'on the basis of the present situation and of what you *see*' (5.87). First, the councillors in vain try to negotiate an outcome agreeable for their city. Then, having ceded even the moral card¹ and being left with no concrete advantage, they turn to unreality: *sometimes* (ἔστιν ὅτε), they say, war grants the better chances (τὰς τύχας 102) also to the weaker forces, so that armed resistance would avoid the hopelessness they see in surrendering immediately. In vain they are warned about the danger of total loss inherent in hope (ἐλπίς) and about the behaviour of the many who, while still in a position to be saved in human fashion, when 'the visible hopes' (αἱ φανεραὶ ἐλπίδες) leave them, turn to 'the invisible ones' (ἐπὶ τὰς ἀφανεῖς), such as seer craft and oracles, etc. (103.2).

Towards the end the Athenians point out that the councillors 'have said nothing in which humans might put their trust so as to believe they will be saved', but that 'your strongest points, being objects of hope, are still to become reality' and will be no help against 'what has been drawn up against you already' (111.2). Even the final reminder, that 'the *choice* is granted about war and safety (survival)' (111.4), cannot induce the Melians to change their decision, so that the Athenians state 'you judge the future to be clearer than what is before your eyes (what is *seen*: τὰ μὲν μέλλοντα τῶν ὄρωμένων σαφέστερα κρίνετε), but what is invisible you by wishful thinking view as already taking place' (113). This is possibly the most concentrated depiction the author provides of a blind decision. It will result in complete destruction.

The Athenian failure in Sicily means less a sequence of crime (Melos) and punishment than one of blind choices. In spite of their ambassadors' injunction, directed at the Melians, to make their choice open-eyed, the Athenians' subsequent decision to conquer Sicily is anything but open-eyed: ἄπειροι οἱ πολλοὶ ὄντες τοῦ μεγέθους τῆς νήσου καὶ τῶν ἐνοικούντων τοῦ πλήθους ('the majority being ignorant of the island's size and the vast number of its inhabitants'), and ignorant also of the fact 'that they were about to

¹ The Melians give up the heroic stance of 5.100 by turning to chance at 102. Stahl (2003a), 163 ff.

raise a war not much inferior to that against the Peloponnesians' (6.1.1). Over the five following chapters the historian provides information on Sicily, concluding (6.6.1): 'So many peoples of Greeks and non-Greeks inhabited Sicily, and against it, although it was so vast, the Athenians were set to campaign.' Right from the beginning, the narrative presents the blindness of the decision as a *fait accompli*. But how did it come about?

So far, simple ignorance may be seen as facilitating the enterprise. But in the subsequent description of the assemblies and speeches that led up to the final decision, there is again the factor of blindness, even arbitrary blindness. The motivation that causes the Athenians to close their eyes to reality is conceptualized in terms of greed, even sexual desire: '... and lust for the voyage overcame all of them in equal fashion', καὶ ἔρως ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ὁμοίως ἐκπλεῦσαι (6.24.3).

The original decision to undertake the campaign was based on information that—in the author's own words—was 'seductive and not true', ἐπαγωγὰ καὶ οὐκ ἀληθῆ, especially about the all-important money allegedly available from the friendly city of Segesta (8.2), the feeling being created that the war would pay for itself. And, making money from the conquest now and into the far future was an essential motivator (24.3).

So one should not be surprised that Thucydides dedicates the major part of his pre-campaign account (6.8.3–24.4) to the (vain) attempts of Nicias, one of the elected generals (and 'elected against his will, but believing that the city was not well advised' 8. 4) to reverse the decision, and to the attempt of one of the other two appointed generals, Alcibiades, to keep the resolution in force.

When four days later a second assembly takes place, its agenda is the prompt equipping of the fleet. But Nicias tries to use it for overturning the decision to go itself, well aware how unwelcome his urgent advice is 'to preserve what is in your hands . . . and not to risk what you have in favour of what is invisible and future', τὰ τε ὑπάρχοντα σώζειν . . . καὶ μὴ τοῖς ἐτοίμοις περὶ τῶν ἀφανῶν καὶ μελλόντων κινδυνεύειν (9.3). The reader cannot but recall the words which the Athenian ambassadors vainly directed at the Melian councillors (5.113; cf. 111). In Thucydidean terms, then, Nicias' arguments are serious. And since Nicias is unable to overcome the information gap and the attitude associated with it, the following lengthy debate of the two generals may be said to contribute also to

Thucydides' investigation into the psychology of blind choices. An excerpt follows.

Nicias: The Athenians would leave many enemies (who are only waiting for a chance to break the existing truce) behind in Greece, while bringing on new ones. Even after a victory in Sicily it would be difficult over so long a distance to control the defeated, whereas an Athenian defeat over there might induce the Sicilians to join Sparta and attack the empire over here. Besides, Athenian manpower has only recently begun to recover from grave disease and war: the city's powers are better spent at home. (Nicias does not believe the report to be true about money being available in Sicily: his assessment agrees with Thucydides' own earlier statement.) And if an ambitious young man—in fact, too young to hold the office—(i.e. Alcibiades) pushes for the expedition, keen only on financing his horseracing lifestyle from the expected booty, be warned! Call off the campaign! Etc. (6.9–14).

Before giving his reader Alcibiades' reply, Thucydides provides a far-reaching assessment of this flawed character's baneful influence on the fate of Athens. In his own voice he once more agrees with Nicias by confirming the truth of the portrait his speech has painted (15.2). The historian has made it clear beforehand that truth of facts will not be Alcibiades' first choice, and that the readers may rather have to place him on the side of the 'untrue and seductive' information from Sicily. Nevertheless, his influence on the decision is considered so great as to deserve detailed attention.

In his reply to Nicias, Alcibiades readily admits his spendthrift lifestyle and—in a democracy!—arrogantly makes a case for inequality of rich and poor. He even reinterprets the defeat of his coalition against the Spartans at Mantinea, claiming that the Spartans have, in spite of their victory, up to this day not regained a firm confidence ... (6.16).

When he advises the assembly to make full use of the benefit provided by his own youth and Nicias' (almost proverbial) good luck, this rationality-defying combination makes it obvious that strategic planning and caution are being thrown to the winds. The voyage to Sicily would not be 'against a great power', ... *ὥς ἐπὶ μεγάλην δύναμιν ἐσόμενον* (17.2). His 'hearsay' information (*ἐξ ὧν ἐγὼ ἀκοῇ αἰσθάνομαι* 17.6) from and about Sicily is more than rosy: the Sicilian cities teem with mixed rabbles, and there is no patriotic attachment to one's city: if one is dissatisfied, one moves

elsewhere and takes along from the community what one can. No united action is to be expected from such a crowd. Rather, if offered an incentive, they will change sides immediately. Our fathers faced the same enemies as we would now leave behind here, and in addition the Persians, but nevertheless they acquired the empire, drawing their strength from the superior fleet. And we now would leave a fleet behind at home that will be equivalent to the expedition force. Preventive war is a requirement for holders of an empire. Etc.

In the end Alcibiades returns to the illogical but rhetorically efficient argument that youth and old age (i.e. in the terms of the two opposing generals, 'Let's go!' and 'Let's cancel the campaign!') without one another can't achieve anything. In this way he *a priori* bags his opponent's position, and for good measure throws in an argument of 'safety' (τὸ δὲ ἀσφαλές 18.5): safety of either staying in Sicily in case of success, or of returning home, will be offered by our superior fleet. (The real alternative, i.e. failure, he does not spell out, in this acting like Croesus sending Cyrus across the Araxes, Hdt. 1.207 ff.)

It is informative to contrast blind illusion with later reality:² not only will in the end the expedition force leave Syracuse *on foot* for its death march across southern Sicily, its fleet having been defeated, but already at an earlier point Nicias, when writing home to ask for reinforcements, will have to tell the Athenians not only that 'all of Sicily is united' (sc. against us 7.15.1), but also that 'now the ships, having been at sea for so long already, are rotten' (7.12.3). And the disillusionment with the safety argument that Alcibiades propounded is duly noted by Thucydides when both the original expedition force and the relief force have been defeated: '... and, when they had been defeated *even at sea (something they would not have believed)*, they were even more at a loss' (7.55.2). When their blind choice reveals itself as the mirage³ it has been, the Athenians in Sicily 'were in every kind of despondency, and their surprise about the incalculable (i.e. the unexpected defeat at sea) was great, *but much greater was their regret about the campaign*' (πολὺ δὲ μείζων ἔτι τῆς στρατείας ὁ μετὰμελος 7.55.1).

² See Stahl (2003a), ch. 9, or (2009).

³ Notwithstanding the rational expectation of the expedition's failure, Thucydides does acknowledge that there were points when the expedition was on the verge of achieving its goal. See Stahl (2003a), ch. 10.

From the whole speech of Alcibiades it appears obvious that Thucydides, after at the opening of book 6, in his own name, providing a first set of objective facts about Sicily, wishes to expose the full range of bogus arguments that seduced the Athenians into believing that conquering Syracuse and Sicily would be a cakewalk. To complete the psychology of a blind decision, there has, on the other hand, of course, to be a willing audience. To better understand also the generic function in Thucydides' thought played by the ensuing speech of Nicias, it is good to recall what the historian says about the cities that thoughtlessly defected from the Athenian empire: that men are 'in the habit of handing over to thoughtless hope what they desire, but what they do not approve they reject with peremptory reason', i.e. with a reasoning that does not tolerate opposition (4.108.4).

When the general Nicias takes the speaker's platform again, the mood of the assembly has intensified: 'the Athenians . . . were much more than before set on the campaign' (19.1). Nicias realizes that with his earlier arguments he will get nowhere. So he thinks of 'perhaps' (τάχ' ἄν: hardly any confidence here either; rather, a last, unlikely possibility)⁴ still inducing them to change their minds by the vast amount of equipment he requests (19.2).

Parodying Alcibiades' 'hearsay' information (. . . ὥς ἐγὼ ἀκοῇ αἰσθάνομαι 20.2, cf. 17.6), he expounds solid facts, which not only contradict Alcibiades' speech but also show agreement with the historian's own introductory information on the vast size and population of Sicily, and which will be borne out later in the saddening experience of the expedition force. To name here only a few:⁵ the cities in Sicily are large and not subject to each other and so are not in want of change; they are equipped similarly to Athens, with heavily armed troops, archers, spear throwers, triremes (including the necessary crews), and money from several sources. Their greatest advantage over us is their cavalry (which indeed will have a devastating effect, since the Athenians won't bring along any cavalry worth mentioning [thirty riders, 6.43], and during the fighting

⁴ τάχα: The word expresses 'any contingency from a probability to bare possibility' (LSJ s.v. II). Here the latter alternative applies, as it does with King Archidamus (like Nicias, a warner who in vain pleads for abstaining from war 1.81.1). Here as there, no sign of optimism is verifiable.

⁵ For a more detailed comparison of Nicias' projections and conditions found in Sicily, see Stahl (2003a), ch. 9, or (2009).

around Syracuse the highest number of Athenian horses reported by Thucydides will be 650 [6.98.1], versus 1,200 Syracusan). The later regret (*μετάμελος*) of the troops will pertain also to facts that Nicias has outlined in advance: 'They encountered these cities alone as of similar character, being democracies as they themselves, and having ships and horses and great numbers, and so they were unable to impose upon them any different status by a constitutional change' (etc., 7.55.2). Obviously, for a decision facts are not considered as such until much later, when their devastating reality is physically experienced.

Nicias knows (*εἰδώς* 6.23.3) that 'we need a lot of good counsel, but even more good luck (difficult since we are humans)'; i.e. he does not wish to rely on that incalculable factor of chance which Alcibiades used to characterize him ('as long as I am still in the bloom of my youth and Nicias appears to be in good luck', 17.1): 'I wish to sail out handing myself over to chance to the least degree possible . . .' (23.3). The Athenians, however, 'did not allow their desire for the expedition to be taken away from them by the burdensome character of the preparations, but were *much more eager* [i.e., even much more than after Alcibiades' speech, 19.1], and the opposite turned out for him' (24.2).

The last sentence should not be taken to mean 'the opposite of what he expected', as if it can refer only to Nicias' shattered hopes. For the following sentence, by *γάρ* providing the reason for the preceding statement, refers to the way the *audience* misinterpreted, even distorted, his words: 'For he *appeared* [*sc.*, to his audience] to *advise well*, and *now* [i.e. after his speech] *certainly* there appeared to be *safety even* (*καί*)⁶ *in abundance*' (24.2). Of course, Nicias had said no such thing. It is his listeners, eager to go on the expedition, who take his 'good' advice their way, attributing to his words the meaning they want to hear. The result: 'And lust for the voyage overcame all of them in equal fashion,' young and old, soldiers and members of the crowd⁷ (24.3): the older ones expect a successful conquest or, at least, no setback for the great force; the younger ones want to see a far-away land—in high hopes of safe survival. Illusion and delusion overrule reality.

⁶ Denniston (1981 [1934]), 318.

⁷ On the difficulty of precisely identifying the groups mentioned, cf. Classen and Steup, *ad loc.*

The fact that Thucydides records the unintended meaning the assembly gives to Nicias' advice confirms that he views blind decisions as an essential factor in history. When the Athenians subordinate the warning, based on rational calculation, to their irrational desire, illogically integrating the unwelcome obstacles into a pseudo-portrait of reality, they behave like the Melians who, to their own ruin, rank the unseen as more trustworthy than what is before their eyes. Like the Athenians' behaviour in the Pylos affair,⁸ their blind decision will lead to regret later. Pylos, Melos, Sicily: In deciding on military action, desire defeats established facts.

II. Herodotus: King Xerxes' Decision to Invade Greece.

(1)(a) Xerxes and Adviser Artabanus, *Stage I*:

Reason Overcome by Supernatural Interference.

My topic requires me to look for the value Herodotus himself in his own design places upon Xerxes' decision. For this, I recall his main coordinates:

The literary framework of the *Histories* is spelled out right at the beginning. Jacoby in his groundbreaking work viewed Herodotus as developing from a writer of individual ethnic or geographical *λόγοι* to the composer of a—more or less fittingly overlaid—'basic plan' (*Grundplan*)⁹ of Greeks fighting against non-Greeks.¹⁰ But he acknowledged for books 7 to 9 a unified composition.

Having excluded mythical accusations espoused by Persian *λόγιοι* about who is *guilty* of having *started* the enmity between Asia and Europe by committing the *first acts of injustice* (1.2.1), Herodotus turns to the man whom '*I myself know to have first begun to commit unjust acts against the Greeks*' (5.3). It was especially Pohlenz who saw the emphasis this sentence places on the 'Unrecht des Kroisos',¹¹ in his eyes pointing to the Greeks' fight for their freedom against Asian imperialism. Here a decisive nuance has come into view: the *moral*

⁸ Cf. *μετεμέλοντο* 4.27.2 = 5.14.2. Stahl (2003a), 151.

⁹ Jacoby (1913 [1956]), 333, 486, also called the *Grundgedanke* (basic idea, 485).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 335.

¹¹ Pohlenz (1961), 10. See also Stahl (1975), 1 f., on the two major themes.

partisanship of the work. Justice is on the side of the Greeks throughout in so far as they are being attacked, and the attacking side is to be viewed as committing acts of injustice. One of the work's two guiding motifs, then, is the Greeks' *just* self-defence against *wrongful* aggression.

The other motif that likewise permeates the whole work is struck in the same sentence, as well as in the one that immediately follows (1.5.3 f.): Herodotus will proceed while 'mentioning *equally* (*ὁμοίως*) small and large cities of men. For the majority of those that were large in times past, have become small; but those that were large in my time were small in the past. *Knowing* then that human prosperity (*τὴν ἀνθρωπηϊήν . . . εὐδαιμονίην*) nowhere stays in the same condition, I shall mention both *in equal fashion*' (*ὁμοίως*: the encircling emphasis of archaic style). The word immediately (asyndetically) following (at 1.6.1) is 'Croesus', the name of the man whose life will paradigmatically demonstrate the motif of the instability of human affairs (and who erroneously believes from his sufferings to have learned enough to be able to manipulate the 'wheel of human affairs that, while turning, does not allow the same people always to be fortunate' 1.207.2).¹²

The instability of the human condition is (as the case of Lydian Croesus shows) a motif that transcends national boundaries. It often overlaps with still another guiding principle that is best called the supernatural dimension in the *Histories*, i.e. effects ascribed to fate/necessity or divine influence (the latter sometimes addressed as divine jealousy, e.g. by Solon at 1.32.1). When the divine makes itself felt in the war of Greeks and non-Greeks, it will usually take the side of the Greeks not only because their enemies perpetrate unjust acts upon them, but also because the excessive character of their enemies' endeavours transgresses the limits the divine has set to humans. Here too, then, is a source of partiality that favours the Greeks. When an important part of the Persian fleet is shipwrecked by storms around Euboea, we read: 'All of this was effected *by the god* in order that the Persian fleet be made equal to the Greek and not be much larger' (8.13).

Having summarized the overarching parameters Herodotus submits to his reader, I can now single out a few facets in Xerxes'

¹² On Croesus misjudging the 'wheel of human affairs', see Stahl (1975), 23–36 and here, n. 23.

multifaceted decision to go to war against Greece. One may be surprised by the predominantly empirical psychology (as we today would term it) in spite of the role assigned to a ghostly appearance in the process. Young Xerxes initially has no inclination to go against Greece, but intends to pursue his deceased father's, Darius', plan of suppressing the revolt of Egypt. Herodotus spends less than one chapter of few lines (i.e. 7.7) on the recovery of Egypt, but (in our numeration) thirteen much longer chapters (7.5–6; 8–18) on the way Xerxes arrives at his decision to attack Greece. As in the Solon–Croesus and the Croesus–Cyrus conversations, Herodotus is again focusing on the decision-making process.

Before leaving for Egypt, Xerxes is pressured into agreeing to a future expedition against Greece (this is his first change of mind, 7.5–6). The parties that work on the young king all have an axe to grind. Most weight is accorded to the influence of Mardonius, a cousin of Xerxes. His father, Gobryas, had secured the first step to the throne for Xerxes' father (cf. especially 3.73 and 3.78). Mardonius himself had led the previous expedition against Greece, which had failed miserably when the fleet was shipwrecked at Mount Athos and the army was severely beaten by the Brygoi (6.44f.). He pleads for revenge against Athens (7.5) for defeating the Persian invasion forces at Marathon (6.113), mixing in suggestions about the attractive wealth of cultivated Europe. Above all, he plays on the insecurity of the young man: after putting down the revolt of Egypt he should move in revenge against Athens, 'in order that a good reputation be attached to you by men, and someone later beware of campaigning against your country' (7.5.2); why either goal might not as well have been achieved already by the reconquest of Egypt obviously depends as much on Herodotus' own *Grundplan* as on Mardonius' plans. Revealing Mardonius' true motivation, Herodotus states that he was 'eager for military enterprise and himself wished to be the satrap of Greece' (7.6.1). Over time (χρόνῳ) Mardonius succeeded in persuading Xerxes to change his mind (ἀνέπεισε).

The other groups working on Xerxes are no less selfish: the Aleuadae family of Thessaly invites Xerxes to Greece (7.6.2; they apparently need support against the democratic faction at home). The Peisistratidae, having sent ambassadors to Susa, hope to be reinstalled as tyrants of Athens. They bring along an interpreter of oracles, Onomacritus, who had been caught *in flagrante* adding some

sinister detail to an oracle. They repeatedly make him recount oracles before Xerxes, but only the good-luck sections, suppressing all predictions that are negative for the Persian side (7.6.3–4).

So Herodotus makes it abundantly clear that young Xerxes' decision is based on misinformation, his mind clouded by lobbyists who do not have his interest in mind. (Their role is similar to that of Alcibiades, the advocate of the Sicilian campaign in Thucydides.) A special warning light for the reader: Onomacritus especially promotes an oracle that predicts the destined bridging of the Hellespont by a Persian man (7.6.4). In the *Histories*, crossing a body of water often has the symbolical meaning of overreaching, beginning with Croesus crossing the Halys and immediately starting a scorched earth war against the Syrians 'who were not guilty of anything' (οὐδὲν ἐόντας αἰτίους 1.76.2). The moral dimension will be more explicit soon.¹³

Upon his return from Egypt, Xerxes addresses his crown council. He explains that he will stick to the tradition he heard from the elders, viz. that 'we have never been resting' (οὐδαμὰ κω ἡτρεμίσαμεν 7.8a.1). Here one has to see (as one has to when Alcibiades propounds a similar argument, Thuc. 6.18.2 f.; 6 f.) that the 'law' (νόμον τόνδε Hdt. 7.8a.1) of unstoppable Persian expansion that Xerxes invokes is being misapplied. For Xerxes' confident trust in divine support of Persia's military enterprises (7.8a.1) is not justified—as the reader knows who, after all, is familiar with the disastrous outcome of Xerxes' expedition. But the 'law' also contradicts Herodotus' philosophy, since it disregards not only the well-tested 'wheel of human affairs' (1.207.2), but also both the historian's observation that large states tend to become small, and his *knowledge* that human prosperity nowhere remains stable (1.5.4).

The young king is presented as feeling pressure when he speaks of rivalling his ancestors by enlarging Persia's power through winning fame and conquering a more productive country, while simultaneously gaining revenge (8a.2). Why would Herodotus for his reader have Xerxes himself repeat the fallacious arguments made earlier by Mardonius, if not to emphasize the flawed basis of Xerxes' judgement when deciding for the war? This becomes especially

¹³ Ζευγνύω in Herodotus 'is part of his systematic attention to proper realms', Lateiner (1989), 128.

apparent when Xerxes embraces the suggestion of that discredited juggler of oracles, Onomacritus, that a Persian will bridge the Hellespont (7.8β.1). Echoing Mardonius, he wants to conquer and burn Athens as a punishment (7.8β.3; singling out Athens, of course, also serves the reputation Herodotus bestows on this city, cf. 7.139). Beyond that, his ambition covers the Peloponnesus (and the rest of Europe). So, 'we shall render the boundaries of our land coextensive with the heavenly realm of Zeus' (7.8γ.1). The Sun-god (to Greek readers, Helios is not just 'the sun') 'will not look down on any country that shares a boundary with ours'. This clearly is *hybris*, disregarding any moral standards: 'In this way those who are guilty towards us will bear the yoke of slavery as well as those who are innocent' (7.8γ.3). Xerxes' attitude matches that of Croesus after he crossed the Halys River.

Xerxes does not seem to leave much room for discussion, even if he insists that he does not want 'to be a lonely decider' (ἰδιοβουλέειν 7.8δ.2). So it is no wonder that only Mardonius (who agrees because he has a personal stake in the campaign) comes forward, while the others 'kept silent and did not dare put forth an opinion opposite to the one placed before them' (*sc.* by Mardonius, 7.10.1).

Herodotus with gusto satirizes the Byzantine climate at the Persian court by bringing the yes-man fully to the fore in Mardonius' second address: 'Oh master (ὦ δέσποτα), the single best not only of the Persians [ever] born, but also of those who will be born in the future, you who with your speech reached the best and most true points on the other topics and, especially, that you won't let the Ionians [= Greeks] who live in Europe, those unworthy ones, sneer at us' (7.9.1).

Of course, flatterer Mardonius has got what he wanted, but at the same time Herodotus has again pointed to the flaws in the one-sided information on which Xerxes' decision is based. He further unmasks the Persian Empire's ruthlessness when Mardonius enumerates the great nations subjected by Persia that 'have committed no acts of injustice against the Persians'. The more reason there is in his eyes to take revenge against the Greeks 'because they started the wrongdoing' (7.9.2). Mardonius here contradicts his literary creator's value judgments both by overlooking the ever-present danger of overreaching and by ascribing wrongdoing to the Greeks who, after all, acted within the context of defending their freedom against unjust aggression—Herodotus' first major topic.

It borders on misrepresentation when he remarks that on his campaign to Macedonia ‘nobody came to oppose [me] in battle’, ‘although I was only a short distance away from arriving in Athens herself’ (ὀλίγον ἀπολιπόντι ἐς αὐτὰς Ἀθήνας ἀπικέσθαι 7.9α2), the true distance from Macedonia to Athens being 200 miles—as the crow flies! Etc.

The house of cards is almost blown over when Artabanus, uncle of Xerxes (as Darius’ brother, he trusts his standing as a close relative), breaks the fearful silence that follows Mardonius’ speech. Artabanus’ arguments amount to an attempt to introduce empirical reality and sound reasoning. But even he feels he first has to defend the usefulness of considering the pros *and the cons* (7.10α.1). He begins by recounting that he advised Darius, ‘your father and my brother’, against undertaking his campaign against the Scythians, ‘a people who nowhere in their land inhabited a city’. ‘But he, hoping to subjugate the *nomadic* Scythians, did not listen to me, and he returned home after losing many good men of his army’ (10α.2). Artabanus chooses his credentials well, also in the eyes of the reader who, having read book 4, can verify how the roaming nomads easily evaded Darius’ grasp. And unlike Mardonius, Artabanus *does* mention, with an eye on Xerxes’ chosen enemies, how the huge Persian army was defeated at Marathon by ‘the Athenians alone’ (7.10β.1).

With regard to the bridging of the Hellespont, Artabanus argues that a defeat of the Persian navy alone might induce the Greek fleet speedily to sail to the Hellespont and break up the bridges that guarantee the safe return of Xerxes and his army. Artabanus again makes his point by referring to past *experience* (‘I am not concluding this myself by any wisdom of my own’ 7.10γ.1) that can be verified by the reader of the *Histories* (4.140.4, 141).

In sum: ‘Do not *you* (σὺ) then wish to arrive at any such danger *while there is no necessity* (μηδεμῆς ἀνάγκης εἰούσης 7.10δ.1), but listen to me!’ The tone has become remarkably stern (and downright ‘uncourtly’), enhanced by the freedom-of-choice topic that will return in Thucydides. ‘So, my advice is: dismiss the council and think matters over by yourself.’

Artabanus does not finish without asyndetically invoking what I earlier termed the supernatural dimension in Herodotus: ‘you see how god with his lightning cuts down the creatures that stand out,

... and also hits high houses and tall trees. So, too, a large army is destroyed by a small one ...' (etc., 10€).

Divine jealousy and human pride in one's superior social status were addressed also by Solon the sage when he in vain warned Croesus about the instability of human prosperity (1.32.1, 9). Not only was Solon, though dismissed by Croesus as foolish (*ἀμαθέα* 1.33), proven right by the ensuing development, but he had also expounded the historian's own basic 'knowledge' about the instability of human prosperity (1.5.4, cf. 32.1–4). It then is safe to say that *Artabanus here voices the author's own tenets*, and that in Herodotus' literary composition a wide arch stretches from his first major example of undue human self-assurance to the last. A Greek victory will help to validate the principles of divine jealousy and of unstable human prosperity. The attempt on Greek freedom is the straw that finally will break the Persian camel's back.

Turning to Mardonius, Artabanus scolds him for luring Xerxes on a campaign by spreading false information about the valour of the Greeks instead of himself leading the army. He expects that great harm will come to Persia through Mardonius, and expects for Mardonius even a death without burial, his corpse somewhere eaten by dogs and vultures (7.10θ.3). Again Artabanus appears somewhat presentient, since Mardonius' body was originally not found after the Persian defeat at Plataea, and later his burial site was not identified with certainty (9.84.1).¹⁴

It appears that the appeal to reason and established facts is as futile in Herodotus as it is in Thucydides. Xerxes, enraged, spares Artabanus despite his 'empty words' (*ἐπέων ματαίων* 7.11.1) only because he is his father's brother, but for being a 'coward' and 'despondent' he excludes him from the campaign and condemns him to stay behind with the womenfolk, etc.

Just when it seems that reason has lost out and blind unreason has taken over, Herodotus takes his account to a new level. At night, sleepless Xerxes is vexed by Artabanus' opinion (*Ξέρξην ἔκνιζε ἡ Ἀρταβάνου γνώμη*, 12.1). He decides that it is not good for him to

¹⁴ Grethlein (2009), 201 observes against Pelling (1991), 135–6 that in general Artabanus 'points out possible dangers', 'even where his expectations are not fulfilled'. I am not persuaded that Herodotus wants his reader to contemplate the question 'how far' Artabanus 'actually gets things right?' (Pelling 1991, 134): warnings are not 'prophecies' or 'prognostications' (Pelling 1991, 120, 134, 136, 139 n. 76).

campaign against Greece, and falls asleep. Then the vision of a tall and beautiful man tells him that he does not do well changing his mind, and that no one around will forgive him (7.12). Two points make it likely that Herodotus wants his reader to understand this, at least to a certain extent, as a 'natural' (vs. a supernaturally inspired) dream: his worries have kept Xerxes from sleeping, so they may easily carry over into his dream; and the reference to a disapproving environment may reflect the young man's insecurity among his urgent advisers. Anyway, when day comes Xerxes discounts the dream.

Calling together the same council, he asks to be forgiven if he has now changed his mind, explaining (γάρ 7.13.2) that he has not yet reached the prime of his intellect and that his advisers do not leave him alone for a moment (this agrees with Herodotus' earlier narrative). He *apologizes* for his youthful outburst against older Artabanus (7.13). So reason seems to have won out.

But in the following night the vision appears again, this time threatening the 'son of Darius' with a speedy fall from eminence into insignificance (7.14). Mention of his father's name gives away the dream's empirical origin and motive: it once more voices the son's fear that he may be unable to rival his father's glory.

Xerxes, now frightened by the threatening vision, calls for Artabanus and recants his initial conduct: at first 'I was not of sound mind when I spoke vain words to you because of your good advice' (7.15.1). At 11.1 he had spoken of Artabanus' words as of ἐπέων ματαίων; now he calls the words he *himself* spoke on that occasion μάταια ἔπεα, and expresses his desire to stay with Artabanus' 'good' advice, but feels unable to do so because of the threatening apparition. To find out if it is god who orders him to undertake the campaign, he wants Artabanus to put on the king's outfit, sit on his throne, and sleep in his bed, to see if the same vision appears also to him (7.15).

Artabanus yields to pressure, but not without first making his (in the eyes of the reader, correct) case that Xerxes is deceived by the company of evil men, and that he, Artabanus, was pained by Xerxes' perilous choice of haughtiness (detrimental to himself and Persia) over the alternative that would end it. He maintains that 'it is evil to teach the soul always to seek to get something more than what is available' (7.16a2).

Artabanus deals with the question of the vision's divine origin by referring to *experience*: 'Being many years older than you, I shall *teach*

you (σε ἐγὼν διδάξω) . . .’ ‘But these things are not divine, *my son*’ (ὦ παῖ: almost a role reversal 7.16β.2). He explains (and this is compatible with Herodotus’ own introduction to the first occurrence of Xerxes’ dream at 7.12.1) that the visions of dreams usually reflect ‘what one is concerned with during the day. And we over the recent days have dealt even very much with this campaign.’

‘But if this thing does have a share in the divine, you were right to say [at 15.3] that it ought to appear to me, too [after all, I was the original opponent of the campaign who [at 7.10] persuaded you to call it off]. So, if my empirical analysis is wrong, “*let the vision appear also to me*” (φανήτω γὰρ δὴ καὶ ἐμοὶ 16γ.1), whether dressed up in your clothing or not: it will not be so stupid as to mistake me for you, going by my dress.’

‘But what we must find out now is this: whether it will hold *me* (ἐμέ) of no account and deem me not worthy of its visit, whether I am dressed in my own clothing or in yours, but will not come (*sc.* to me):¹⁵ for if it will continue to come (i.e. also to me), I myself too would certainly say it is divine.’ ‘Since you insist that I sleep in your bed’: ‘*all right,*’ ‘*let it appear to me, too.*’ ‘*But up to then I’ll stick to my present opinion*’ (16γ.2f.). Artabanus, ‘expecting to prove that Xerxes’ talk amounted to nothing’ (17.1), seems unaware that according to his own theory about the daytime origins of dreams he may be setting himself up for precisely that experience which he so far has refused to take seriously.

How then is the reader supposed to assess the phantom’s appearance, in Artabanus’ sleep? Certainly the conditions once more favour the ‘empirical’ interpretation, especially since Herodotus again emphasizes the circumstances as he did on the occasion of Xerxes’ initial dream (at 7.12.1): Artabanus ‘did as he was bidden: when, upon putting on Xerxes’ outfit and sitting on the royal throne, he *after this* fell asleep . . .’ (17.1). The reader cannot but understand that the thoughts of Artabanus, too, before he falls asleep in the king’s bed and garments, are about the expedition—and about the presumably unlikely appearance of the dream. If one accepts the ‘empirical’ explanation, is the threatening character of the apparition (in established Persian custom, the phantom seems about to punish Artabanus by

¹⁵ The reading οὐδὲ is superior to σέ δέ, representing a feature characteristic of archaic prose by repeating (summarizing) the initial protasis. After all, Artabanus views his theory about the empirical origin of dreams as not refuted as long as the phantom has not appeared also to *him*.

burning out his eyes for dissuading Xerxes and for preventing ‘what is destined to happen’ 17.2)—is perhaps the apparition’s threatening character a reflection of doubts Artabanus has had about whether he has been right in trying to prevent the campaign and so perhaps might be harming the glory of continuous Persian expansion? Here the reader may find the psychological root (activated by the nightmarish scare) of Artabanus’ readiness to overthrow his own dream theory and of his willingness now to influence Xerxes to change his mind for the third time—while this time actually inaugurating the devastating result the campaign will have for Persia.¹⁶

While this interpretation is self-consistent, it does not account for the unusual but meaningful phrase used by the apparition, ‘what is destined to happen’ (τὸ χρεὸν γενέσθαι 17.2), which points to the metaphysical dimension in Herodotus’ work (as outlined earlier). King Candaules caused his own downfall by committing a crime against his country’s customs, but it also was destined that he should perish: *χρῆν γὰρ Κανδαύλῃ γενέσθαι κακῶς* (1.8.2; cf. 91.1), and Croesus’ own hubris caused his downfall—but as the fifth successor of Gyges, the (involuntary) usurper, he also was destined to fall (1.13.2). That Artabanus’ original advice was wise cannot be in doubt—if one has Xerxes’ (and Persia’s) well-being in mind. But if a greater necessity requires the expedition against Greece *and its failure*, then *a blinding of Xerxes’ judgement must take place for him to make the fateful decision*. And for this blinding, the wise adviser must at least temporarily become, in the human sphere, unwise. Under this perspective, the beautiful tall man of the dream is a tool of destiny, furthering the development that leads Persia to meet the ultimate limit of its expansion.¹⁷

¹⁶ See Shapiro’s incorrect statement (1994), 353 on Stahl (1975), that ‘Stahl ... claims that Artabanus ... *inexplicably* loses his wisdom’, and that ‘Herodotus gives us *no explanation* as to why he changes his mind’ (my italics). She corrects (?) Stahl by saying: ‘Artabanus changes his mind only after both he and Xerxes have been visited by divinely-sent dreams.’ Compare Stahl’s own words (1975), 31: ‘... he changes his mind ... when he ... experiences the same sort of nightmare as the young king.’

¹⁷ Of course, the detrimental apparition (detrimental for Persia, that is) not only fits in well with Herodotus’ nationalistic theology of punishment of anti-Greek hubris, but also solves his problem of returning to the fact of the campaign taking place, after he has, by letting Xerxes accept rational reasoning twice, his two major characters embark on the (for their country) preferable but counterfactual course. In this, their dialogues parallel ‘extra-dramatic’ communications of characters in Euripidean drama (cf. Stahl 2003b).

Herodotus at this point once more shows that, for the sake of the expedition, *past experience has to be thrown to the winds*: ‘I (emphasizing ἐγὼ), O king, as a human having seen already many great undertakings being brought down by lesser forces, did not want to let you yield in all things to your youthful impetuosity, because I *knew* (ἐπιστάμενος) that it is *bad always to desire many things*’—and here he cites events well known to Herodotus’ readers: ‘*Knowing*’ (ἐπιστάμενος, again the emphasis on empirical knowledge) ‘these things, I held the opinion that you would be called happy by all men if you stayed at rest’ (18.2). But now Artabanus acknowledges ‘a divine impulse’, believing that a ‘god-driven ruin is overtaking the Greeks’, so ‘I myself, too, turn around and change my opinion’.

‘As soon as it became day’, Xerxes submitted his new decision to the Persians, ‘and Artabanus, who earlier was conspicuous in alone trying to prevent the campaign, now manifestly expressed his support’ (ὃς πρότερον ἀποσπεύδων μούνος ἐφαίνετο, τότε ἐπισπεύδων φανερός ἦν 18.4). The well-balanced concluding sentence, by means of a *paronomasia* emphasizing the influential adviser’s change of mind, stresses the decisive link in the chain of Xerxes’ changing decisions. The emphasis is the more remarkable since the adviser himself will later (cautiously) recant (7.47.2, see below).

A similar combination of desire for more and disregard of sensible advice while giving in to supernatural guidance (seductive and therefore easily misread: in Herodotus it serves fulfilment of destiny) can also be recognized in the Athenians’ decision to invade Sicily: there the position of the supernatural incitement has been filled by Alcibiades, while the role of (vainly) providing fact-based advice has fallen to Nicias.

II. (1)(b) Homeric precedent: Nestor and Agamemnon’s Dream: the Advisor Recants—Twice.

The circumstance that the wise adviser changes sides and is convinced by a divine sign to endorse the decision of his erring advisee, but then ultimately returns to his initial position, as well as the relationship of divine intervention and empirical psychology played out in Xerxes’ soul, are two features that receive unexpected elucidation

tion from an examination of Homer, though it has long been noted that Xerxes' dream 'is modelled on that of Agamemnon'.¹⁸ Zeus, in fulfilment of his promise made to Thetis, designs defeat for Agamemnon, because Agamemnon, against the strong objections of wise old Nestor (2.275 f.), has in public dishonoured Achilles, Thetis' son, and even taken away his spear-bride, Briseis. So Zeus sends a deceptive dream.¹⁹

Dream, appearing in the shape of wise old *Nestor*, addresses the Greek chief by chiding him: 'Son of Atreus, wise tamer of horses, you are asleep?! A man of counsel should not be asleep all night long, to whom the army is entrusted and who deals with so many worries' (2.23 f.). Agamemnon's worrisome situation is, as a reflection of his daytime concerns, comparable to that of Xerxes in the night when the threatening apparition appears to him. Agamemnon has insulted and antagonized his best warrior, Achilles, on whom he and his army depend for their safety. Achilles refuses henceforth to fight. It is, then, only natural that these worries follow the commander-in-chief into his sleep.

Another empirically understandable feature is that Dream provides Agamemnon with the assurance—in his present situation highly desirable and comforting—that Zeus (traditionally, the protector of kings) pities him and cares for him (2.27).

And thirdly, there is the main message, which unmasks *the whole dream as a product of wishful thinking*: Agamemnon can now take Troy (2.28 f.), i.e. in terms of Agamemnon's deepest desire: 'I can do it—without Achilles!'

This opens access to a final, likewise empirically explainable feature, viz. that Dream should appear in the likeness of Nestor; for aged Nestor, like Artabanus an adviser of established credentials, had warned Agamemnon not to alienate and, by taking away Achilles' spear-bride (1.275 f.), insult his strongest warrior, 'who for all [of us]

¹⁸ See e.g. the reference to Agamemnon's dream in How and Wells (1928), *ad* 7.12.2.

¹⁹ That divine intervention by Zeus is not needed for the Greeks to be defeated in the absence of their strongest hero is in line with Homer's frequent practice not to let divine intervention invalidate empirical causality. This is a recurring feature in epic, from Homer to Apollonius Rhodius to King Turnus' dream in *Aeneid* 7. See also Stahl (2008). Herodotus is able to use the two-level presentation to illustrate his concept of the larger, supra-individual course of history. It is probably due to his pro-Greek partisanship that in his historical account here the divine and destiny do not display the transparency of the *Iliad's* fiction but are accorded a metaphysical reality.

Greeks is a great defensive wall²⁰ against the evil war' (*Il.* 1.283f.). If in the dream Nestor reverses himself by announcing Agamemnon's ability to conquer Troy on his own, then the formerly dissuading adviser has—like Artabanus—changed sides. If dream-Nestor, then, has come over to buttress Agamemnon's prospects, Agamemnon can take pleasure in feeling that his insulting conduct towards Achilles is neither damaging nor blameworthy after all.

Still, there remains the question how the real, daytime-Nestor will react. Agamemnon, encouraged by the false dream ('fool' Homer revealingly calls him 2.38), gets up and dresses himself in royal splendour, up to the divinely wrought inherited sceptre, 'eternally indestructible'. Clearly, Homer is here painting a case of 'The Emperor's New Clothes'. (Agamemnon will soon be holding the sceptre helplessly while being ridiculously exposed; cf. 2.185 ff.)

Agamemnon proceeds by calling a council of the chiefs, diplomatically picking as the meeting place the ship of *Nestor*, the warning adviser whom he most wants to win over, so that he himself may look justified. Reacting to the report of the dream, Nestor responds:

My friends, leaders and rulers of the Argives,
if someone else of the Achaeans would have related this dream,
we would say it is a lie and rather remove ourselves.
But now he has seen it who glories himself to be the best by far of the
Achaeans.

Up then, [let us see] if we can somehow arm the sons of the Achaeans!
2.79–83

So the real (daytime) Nestor, too, has been won over, revealing himself here as a loyalist with a subordinate's mentality. Like Artabanus, he is now ready to recant his own earlier, experience-based, position, which took the vital function of Achilles for the whole army's survival into account (1.283 f.). Unlike Artabanus, it does not take an apparition to sway him.

But Nestor's initial conversion is not the end of his story. When Agamemnon's military offensive has failed miserably and he, bottled up in his own camp, is worse off than before he went on the attack, it is Nestor who addresses him in the council and not only advises him to reconcile Achilles, but also has returned to his original position:

²⁰ *ἔρκος*: Die Grundbed. ist "(schützende) Einfriedung" (Zaun, Mauer); übertragen "Schutzwehr", von Defensivwaffen . . . und Kriegern . . . Latacz (2002), *ad Il.* 1.283b–284.

For no one else will think a better thought than this one
 that *I* think, both long ago and even now still,
 ever since you, Zeus-ordained, went and took the girl Briseis
 away from the tent of angry Achilles,
 not in agreement with *my* thought. For *I for my part*
 very much tried to dissuade you. But you . . .

9.104–9

It is this special feature of the converted adviser returning to his original position (expressed at 1.275 f.) that seems to tie Herodotus' Artabanus to Homer's Nestor. But, whereas the commander-in-chief, Agamemnon, now does listen and (at, least, partially) admits his mistake (*ἁασάμην* 9.119), Herodotus uses the occasion of the adviser's retraction to develop the blindness of the advisee to a new climax, *after* the decision has been made.

II. (2) Xerxes and Artabanus, *Stage II: After the Decision.*

The advisor Recants (again), the Advisee Repudiates
 Established Facts as well as Supernatural Warnings.

The occasion is truly worthy of revisiting the arguments that led to the preceding decision (as well as adding a few new ones): Xerxes' army has reached the Hellespont, and the attempt against Greece, the climax of Herodotus' work, is about to begin. Crossing this body of water into Europe also has a symbolic meaning.²¹ In Xerxes' case, the act is aggravated by the additional circumstance that he had the Hellespont punished for allowing his first set of bridges to be destroyed (7.54.3).

Xerxes, from a throne placed on an elevation, looks down on the sea teeming with his ships and the land teeming with his army. Considering himself blessed (as once Croesus did), he suddenly bursts into tears, touched by the thought of the shortness of human life. But Artabanus (the same who, *the author reminds us*, originally advised against the campaign 7.46.1), like a second Solon (1.32.1–4: Herodotus is closing a great ring in his work), points out that accidents and diseases make everyone more than once in this short life wish rather to be dead: god is jealous (7.46.3 f.; cf. 1.32.1), and grants only a taste of sweetness in life.

²¹ Immerwahr on occasion appropriately speaks of the 'river motif' (1966: e.g. 92, 166).

Like short-sighted Croesus, Xerxes quickly brushes off such depressing thoughts: 'Let us not call up calamities while we have good things in our hands' (7.47.1; cf. 1.33). By the 'good things', of course, he confidently means his overwhelming military might. It even emboldens him to return to a tricky issue: 'If the vision of the dream had not appeared to you so distinctly, would you [still] have your old opinion²² and not let me campaign against Greece, or would you have changed your mind [by now]?' (Pause.) 'Come on, tell me this truthfully!' Obviously, even now there is still some lingering desire in Xerxes' mind for taking his common-sense adviser's consent with him on the campaign.

Like Nestor, Artabanus openly confesses his return to his original misgivings ('... would that the vision ... turn out as both of us wish! But I for my part am even up to now still filled with fear and out of my mind'); then he quickly turns to the present situation and its new fears that paradoxically arise precisely out of the seeming superiority of the Persian forces, the source of Xerxes' confidence. Artabanus points out that *size itself* invites danger from Xerxes' two greatest enemies, land and sea, γῆ τε καὶ θάλασσα (49.1). The larger his fleet, the smaller the possibility of finding, in case of a storm, adequately sized harbours, particularly along an extended coastline. Without capacious harbours—here the adviser turns stern instructor—'*learn* that the accidents rule men and not men the accidents!' (49.3).

This empirically based analysis will be confirmed later by the storm off the coast of Magnesia that wrecks a large part of the Persian fleet moored out at sea (7.188). But Xerxes is no longer open to sound reasoning, so the second argument, too, which repeats a Herodotean moral component he was once willing to listen to, is now lost on him: 'the land will become more hostile the farther you advance', 'always enticed further on: *for men never get enough of good fortune*' (49.4; cf. 7.16a.2). And in the course of the extended occupation process, 'the land, I say, becoming more extended with the passing of more time, will give birth to a famine' (49.5; and in fact, a large part of the army on their retreat back to the Hellespont will be forced to eat even tree bark and foliage, 8.115).

²² *Εἰς ἄν* represents a contrary-to-fact clause of the *present*, not of the past. Xerxes is here not considering a 'what if' question 'about a series of events that has already found its closure' (Grethlein 2009, 212 f.). Rather, this is a recurring flare-up of his earlier insecurity.

Obviously, Herodotus is interested in laying out the faulty premises of the Persian campaign as well as the change in Xerxes' mindset. And since he gives his reader the means to check out whether the arguments of Xerxes or those of Artabanus approximate the later course of events, he in this feature, too, proves himself a forerunner of Thucydides' technique of measuring plans and warnings by their factual outcome.

Upon maintaining that forethought about everything entails achieving nothing (7.50.1), Xerxes leaves the bounds of logic: better (a) be daring in everything and suffer half the evils than (b) fear everything and suffer nothing. That in case of (a) his campaign may (and will) suffer not half but *all* the evils, lies beyond his scope as it lay beyond Croesus' scope that his advice to cross the Araxes might entail disaster for Cyrus.²³ Topping this 'insight', Xerxes blames his 'contentious' (ἐπ' ἕζων 50.2) adviser for himself being—like all humans—unable to show forth the safe course.

With advisers like Artabanus (and counsel such as he provides), Xerxes maintains, his predecessors would never have advanced the Persian Empire to its present state (50.3). Mentioning neither the deadly outcome this philosophy has meant for Cyrus (killed by

²³ On Croesus' detrimental advice to Cyrus, see Stahl (1975), 23–30. Space limitations force me to be brief. Adviser Croesus gives no indication whatsoever that he is thinking in the specific terms of having lost his own 'centre of government, Sardis' to Cyrus, 'reliving his own past too closely', as Pelling (2006, 171; cf. 're-enact Croesus' own past', *l.c.*) suggests. Croesus does not say to Cyrus that, if victorious on the other side of the Araxes, 'you will drive straight on to Tomyris' *seat of power*' (1.207.4; Pelling's trans. on p. 166; my italics): ἰθὺ τῆς ἀρχῆς τῆς Τομύριος rather means 'straight into the *realm* of Tomyris', as just before at 1.207.3 and as at 1.91.4. So Croesus also, when warning Cyrus of a possible invasion by Tomyris, says 'against your lands', ἐπ' ἀρχὰς τὰς σὰς (1.207.3), not perhaps against the centre of his power. Croesus' 'misperception' is comprehensive and far less specific than Pelling's mistranslation would grant. Also, chapter 5.118 does not furnish even an *indirect* parallel ('the parallel' Pelling 1991, 130 n. 39; see also Pelling 2006, 170 with n. 102) for claiming that Herodotus may agree with Croesus' advice for Cyrus. This fails to note the different situations and Herodotus' literary emphasis. If fighting beyond the river, the Carians would become 'even' (ἐτι 5.118.2) *braver than their natural valour*' (Pelling, *l.c.*, is wrong in dropping the ἐτι from his translation, saying, 'that formulation builds on Herodotus' frequently dismissive attitude to the courage of the Asiatic Greeks'). Doubtless Cyrus' crossing of the Araxes falls under the same rubric of 'blind decisions preceding military action' as Croesus' crossing of the Halys and Xerxes' crossing of the Hellespont. Shapiro's (1994, 351) thesis that Croesus' advice to Cyrus shows 'Solonian wisdom' (my italics) ought not to be propped up extra-contextually by Greek ambassadors' words uttered in Sicily on another occasion (1994: 352).

the Massagetae), for mad Cambyses (dead from an accidental wound and after heavy military losses on his way home after conquering Egypt), nor the danger his father Darius faced in Scythia (cases well known in detail to Herodotus' reader), Xerxes vows to rival those forerunners. He unknowingly further illustrates his blindness to reality by denying that he is taking the risks he just advocated, arguing that he will campaign in the best season through cultivated, food-providing lands (picking up Mardonius' point—no famine: no nomads here as in Darius' case), so that a victorious return after 'conquering all of Europe' to him seems certain (50.4). Again the reader will see Xerxes corrected when, dramatically effective, Herodotus will follow up the arrival in Susa of the report about the (Pyrrhic) conquest of Athens with the devastating news of the defeat of Salamis (8.99). Thucydides may indeed have learned from his forerunner about the historically relevant discrepancy of blind planning and disastrous outcome.

In his final argument, Artabanus advises against taking the conquered Ionians along on a campaign against their mother city of Athens (7.51.1–3). Actually, at Artemisium some Ionians will show themselves quite eager to fight their relatives (8.10.2), while at Salamis even the majority will act in this way (8.85.1).

But at this point the future is hardly an appropriate basis for checking out the strength or weakness of Xerxes' counter-argument, since here he decides to draw on *past experience*: 'Artabanus, of the opinions you laid out *you are most mistaken in this one* (52.1), when you fear that the Ionians may change sides, of whom we have the *strongest evidence* of which *you yourself turn witness* as well as the others who joined Darius on his campaign (τῶν ἔχομεν γνώμα μέγιστον, τῶν σύ τε μάρτυς γίνεαι καὶ οἱ συστρατευσάμενοι Δαρείῳ ἄλλοι) . . .'. Xerxes' 'evidence': When Darius withdrew from Scythia the survival of the whole Persian army depended on the reliability of the Ionians, guardians of the bridge across the Danube: 'They showed *justice and loyalty*, but nothing unpleasant' (52.1; and besides, we have their women and children in our hands . . ., 52.2).

While the argument bracketed above has the undeniable force of Persian coercive domination, it is the one given in quotes that seems to stand reality on its head: Artabanus earlier had not only reminded Xerxes that Darius' power had depended on *one man's* lonely opposition against his peers (10γ) but had also, *as an eyewitness* of Darius' campaign, warned him *not to invade* Greece, 'remembering

... also that I was with Darius on his campaign against the Scythians' (18.2). Actually, Herodotus reports that Artabanus had justified his initial warning by describing to Darius 'in detail the difficulty of dealing with the Scythians' (4.83.1). And Herodotus himself in his own words calls the advice Artabanus gave Darius 'useful': *συμβουλευὼν οἱ χρηστά* (4.83.3), so Artabanus' argument against Darius is backed by the authority of the historian.

By reminding Artabanus of his participation in Darius' campaign while using Artabanus' own word (*σύ τε . . . καὶ οἱ συστρατευσάμενοι* at 7.52.1 picks up *συστρατευσάμενος* from 18.2), Xerxes invites his adviser to gainsay his own earlier testimony; by grouping him as an alleged witness together with the other participants in Darius' campaign, Xerxes appears to exercise mental pressure, indicating that Artabanus might find himself in isolation when contradicting the other campaign participants, who might endorse their present king's version in the same way as the crown council kept silent after Mardonius' adulatory speech (7.10.1). Repudiated Artabanus is sent back to Susa (53.1) in a way comparable to Cyrus sending his adviser, Croesus, home before himself crossing the Araxes (1.208).

Herodotus' reader is well able to verify that it is Xerxes, not Artabanus, who is 'most mistaken' about the Ionians' alleged loyalty and the danger incurred at the Danube bridge: far from acting in loyalty to the Persian throne, Histiaeus had convinced his fellow Ionian tyrants that they could only lose by destroying the bridge. For their positions as tyrants of their cities depended on Persian support (4.137). Without it, they would be toppled in favour of democratic constitutions. Histiaeus' motivation as well as that of his colleagues was pure egoism, and did not indicate *δικαιοσύνην καὶ πιστότητα*, as Xerxes suggests (52.1).²⁴ Obviously Herodotus desires to make

²⁴ Pelling's line of reasoning is hardly persuasive. 'On the details, too, Xerxes is no dimwit.' . . . 'Most strikingly, at 52.1 Xerxes *neatly* turns Artabanus' own earlier advice against him. Artabanus himself, after all, had at 10γ commented on how Histiaeus had *in the end* remained loyal, *despite all the temptations*, and Xerxes now reminds him of this (52.1). He is *learning* from his adviser, but he is learning the wrong lesson' (Pelling 1991, 135, with a note referring to von Fritz; my italics). Where in the text does Pelling find '*all the temptations*', presumably mentioned by Artabanus at 7.10γ? Artabanus does *not* 'comment' on any steadfast loyalty of Histiaeus: as a participant of and an eyewitness to Darius' Scythian campaign, Artabanus does not contradict the motivation that the historian himself records of Histiaeus and his tyrant colleagues, viz. to preserve their tyrannies (4.137).—Along similar lines, Baragwanath (2008), 182 points to 'the *tempting inducements to be expected from the King*' (etc.; my italics). Extra-textual 'tempting inducements' likewise distract from Artabanus' precise reference.

abundantly clear that, at the time of leaving Asia, optimistic Xerxes was no longer in touch with reality.

The actual crossing of the army 'during seven days and seven nights without interruption' (56.1), watched by Xerxes (56.2), repeats a visual impression that was also conveyed in Xerxes' review of his huge army and navy at Abydos (44). Together, the two paintings prefigure the proud and pompous departure of the Athenian expedition from the Piraeus (Thuc. 6.30–2) that will likewise result in failure. And as Herodotus inserts Xerxes' fit of melancholy (7.45), so Thucydides inserts a brief cloud of fear into the splendour displayed by the departing Athenian expedition force (6.31.1). The two events are further brought together: Herodotus has Xerxes watch a competition among his ships at Abydos (7.44), and Thucydides records how the departing Athenian ships raced each other as far as Aegina (6.32.2). Both competitions display a show of abundant strength and confidence before the shadow of an as yet unanticipated future calamity (but a calamity known to the reader). Again, Thucydides may have received a stimulus from his forerunner for painting his own sequence. And both paintings echo Agamemnon's confidence following his false dream of quick conquest.

Herodotus concludes his lengthy account of how Xerxes' mind was increasingly clouded by adding a final dimension (7.57): after he had crossed the Hellespont, a 'powerful portent' appeared, *to which Xerxes, though it was easily decodable* (εὐσύμβλητον 57.1; the word is used twice, producing the emphasis peculiar to archaic prose style), *paid no attention* (τὸ Ξέρξης ἐν οὐδενὶ λόγῳ ἐποίησατο): a horse gave birth to a hare. Herodotus *in his own voice* explains the 'easy' portent, thus ensuring that none of his readers would miss its meaning: Xerxes was about to drive his army against Greece most proudly and splendidly, but would come back to precisely his point of departure running for his life. As if in a tragedy, Xerxes has missed the very last chance, a transparent chance, to face his situation open-eyed.

III. Herodotus—Thucydides: Affinities.

One may confidently state that the two historians arrive at a basic affinity of outlook when they describe how blind decisions precede disastrous outcomes. Thucydides' general statement on men's habit

of using their reasoning faculty for arguing away unwelcome obstacles while pinning fulfilment of their wishes on 'thoughtless hope' (4.108.4) covers men in Herodotus' work as well. Here, especially, the two-stage, increasingly irrational and anti-intellectual development of Xerxes' mindset demonstrates the same weakness of rational and empirically based arguments in the face of human nature's irrepressible drives. And in giving his readers the means to check out whether Artabanus' or Xerxes' projections approximate the later events (or misrepresent past events), Herodotus proves himself a forerunner of Thucydides and his technique of measuring plans and warnings by the factual outcome.

Even in less prominent features such as detailing seductive but irrational arguments through the speeches of individuals—Alcibiades in Thucydides book 6 or the lobbyists influencing Xerxes in Herodotus book 7²⁵—the two authors show a similarity. This is also true in the contrasting paintings of initial confidence and eventual distress, or of abundance and strength proudly displayed at the opening of a campaign versus debility and famine at the end. Such structural similarities in the accounts of both authors—and in our wider framework, also of Homer, whose picture of the over-reaching and later humiliated Agamemnon is paralleled in the human behaviour curves of Achilles, Patroclus, and even the initially humble Hector²⁶—suggest that the investigation has touched upon an essential strain in the Greek experience, a strain akin to Tragedy and, perhaps, not inaccessible to inquisitive minds in our own day and time.

As the prevailing human cause there appears, most clearly in the sphere of blind decisions preceding military actions, 'desire for more' (or, to use the contemporary parlance of post-crash Wall Street analysis, 'blind greed').

²⁵ From Thucydides' work, one may add the Corinthians' speech in 1.68–71, or even Pericles' pre- and early-war optimism in 1.140–4 and 2.40.2 (Stahl 2003a, 55 f., 76 f.). Recently, Foster has convincingly argued (against much of the scholarly tradition) that 'it is possible to separate Thucydides' views from Pericles' views' (2010: 3).

²⁶ On the behaviour curves of the leading Homeric heroes in the *Iliad*, esp. of Hector, see a brief synopsis in Stahl (1999), 250 f.

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Oaths: Theory and Practice in the *Histories* of Herodotus and Thucydides*

Donald Lateiner

I. INTRODUCTION

Weighing Thucydides' implicit (therefore, at best, only alleged) criticisms of—and homage to—his predecessor Herodotus demands comparison and examination of 'normal' institutions. Included oaths, for example, deserve examination as well as accounts of speeches, battle-challenges, and diplomatic threats. Oath furnishes one noteworthy index of sophisticated social and legal analysis embedded in ancient historical narrations. The historians' use of this specific index shows that they treat oaths in some significantly different ways. While Herodotus mentions only the gist of an earlier generation's inter-state oaths, Thucydides can transcribe every clause of certain contemporaneous treaties. He surprises expectation occasionally, for instance, when he records the names of each individual signatory to treaties: seventeen Spartans and seventeen Athenians (5.19, 4.119).

When, where, and how do Herodotus and Thucydides include oaths? After situating oath in Hellenic thought, we map fifth-century test cases onto that pattern. Oath practice grids poorly onto oath theory, perhaps unsurprisingly. Gaps open up among oath ideology,

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oath construction, and real outcomes. These solemn legal-religious-political compacts produce disconnects of historical significance and ethical consequence. For both historians, oaths measure ethical standards and flag shifts in political behaviour, but Herodotus emphasizes consequent, eventual catastrophes for the violators (or their progeny) and Thucydides the (regrettable) absence of consequences.

Sworn statements as to truth or future action, exchanged by wary interactants and witnessed by higher powers, punctuate high-stakes dealing among Greeks. The binding oath had unique importance in preliterate societies and remains central in later alphabet-dependent ancient Hellas and in our contemporary world.¹ Hellenic oaths regularly punctuated interpersonal relations (ethical commitments), domestic judicial proceedings, and inter-city diplomacy. Extant records suggest that Greek oath procedure followed a consistent pattern: an oath asserts something past as fact or promises something for the future with an invocation to the gods to punish the swearer if the assertion proves false or the promise is not kept. That self-curse invites a rebalancing, or *tisis*, for falsehood or non-performance. The oath thus stabilizes and seals an uneasy relation between two, or more, parties.²

The details of the Hellenic oath process require brief attention. Pact making had fixed features and often required a symbolic performance such as sacrifice. Ceremonial, sanctifying visible behaviours, such as ritual gestures, blood, and other objects, made

¹ J. Mikalson's article on 'Oaths' and H. Versnel's on 'Curses' in *OCD*³ (1999) offer a foothold. Hirzel (1902), Gernet (1968 [1949]), and Plescia (1970) provide studies of oath, but they scant Herodotus' rich examples. See Karavites (1992) on Homeric debts to Near Eastern treaty making and Faraone's essays (1993, 1999, 2005) on ritual aspects of Hellenic oaths and Near Eastern antecedents and analogues. Burkert (1985), 250 and Cole (1996), 227, 236 discuss the significance of Hellenic oaths. Alan Sommerstein directs the Nottingham University research project on 'Oath in Archaic and Classical Greece'. He and Judith Fletcher published (2007) seventeen essays on Greek oath, of which only Hornblower's essay directly addresses historiographical oaths. The Nottingham lists (http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/classics/oaths/database/reference_list.php), consulted 30.12.07, collect citations that either mention a specific oath or necessitate a swearing event (such as a truce, treaty, contract, etc.). They amass over 3,700 Greek examples. For Herodotus, they include, e.g., all situations where *symmachoi* or *spondai* are mentioned, even when no term for swearing appears. This study includes two examples that Sommerstein et al. ignore—perhaps because both parties are not Greek and certainly because the swearing of covenants is not certain.

² Cf. Ziebarth (1905) and Janko (1992), 194–5, 232–3.

oaths more effective and solemn utterances.³ Custom and law may specify places of oath taking, of oath renewing, and even a supply of enduring surfaces on which to record them.⁴ Ritual actions crystallize and strengthen oaths. Examples include truce-enforcing blood offerings, cutting and consuming, and the heaving or dashing of objects. Achilles' swearing his second oath by the Achaean sceptre (*Il.* 1.233; cf. 86–8) depicts an object by which oath gains *gravitas*.⁵ Recall the unique, melting Theran wax dolls,⁶ libations, and 'full grown sacrifices', and, in Herodotus, the iron mass that the shipboard, outbound Phocaeans threw into the sea, declaring that the Hellenes would remain absent 'until the iron should rise'. The departed object symbolizes their community's irreversible departure from Anatolia with the impossible act of iron rising from the sea (*Hdt.* 1.165).

Hellenic oaths state a fact about the past or the present (declaratory and evidentiary) or promise act or word for the future (promissory).⁷ A conditional curse often accompanies such asseverations. This curse is likely to be explicit in situations of danger to self, the recipient, or the community, such as the brain-bashing threats in battlefield agreements (e.g. *Il.* 3.295–301), but sometimes the consequences of perjury remain only implicit. The gods supply sureties (*θεοὶ ὄρκιοι*),⁸ enforcing doom for the benefit of the second party, if

³ The Phocaeans' iron deposited in the sea also ratifies words with deeds. Non-verbal ritual emphasizes the gravity of testimony. A primitive soldiers' communion (*Hdt.* 3.11, including water, wine, and blood) has Homeric antecedents also: *Il.* 3.269–70, 292–5; *Plat. Crit.* 119d–120b; cf. Gernet (1968), 167–8). A nod down ratifies divine irrevocable oaths; Zeus tells Thetis who seems doubtful (*Il.* 1.514, 524–7: *κατανεύσον . . . μέγιστον/ τέκμων . . . οὐδ' ἄλιν ἄγρετον*).

⁴ e.g., *Thuc.* 5.47, *Ath. Pol.* 55.5: the Athenian archons swear on the stone of sacrifice.

⁵ Sometimes objects are 'activated' (Burkert's term) as guarantors of the oath, such as Achilles' sceptre, Hera's bed, or an altar (*Il.* 1.233–46, 15.36–40; *IG II/III* 1237.76, 108–13).

⁶ The difficult Cyrene inscription, *SEG* 9.3, cf. Graham (1964), 27–8, Meiggs and Lewis (1969), *Inscr.* #5, Faraone (1993), 60–1. The conditional Hellenic self-curse with a ritual of sympathetic magic rarely finds record, although this absence may reflect the suppression of magical practice in 'high' literature. Faraone (1993), 80 lists six historical Greek examples before the end of the fifth century: Alcaeus (*LP Frg.* 129), the Theran/Cyrenaean and Phocaean exx. discussed here, the oaths of Plataea, that initiating the Delian League, and the oath sworn by Greek mercenaries to the Persian Ariaios (*Xen. Anab.* 2.2.4).

⁷ Evidentiary oaths are also termed 'assertory' or 'testamentary'. Agamemnon's most solemn oath of sexual self-denial includes blood sacrifice (*Il.* 19.249–68).

⁸ Each oath sworn is validated, explicitly or implicitly, by human affirmation and by invocation, as witness and guarantor, of guardian divinity/ies. The specific

the oath is broken.⁹ Private business deals or trades, cases brought to law, marriages, state treaties, and other contracts and obligations were often so sealed. The oath protocols of the *Iliad* illuminate any study of oath in Greek culture, although we lack space here adequately to consider them.¹⁰

Despite the everyday ubiquity of oaths, their frequency varies in the two historians. Herodotus cites far fewer civic or inter-polis oaths than Thucydides does (58 to 269, by the Nottingham Oath Project's count). He has a penchant for narrating artfully evaded personal agreements, the pathology of personal oath. Thucydides' more than quadrupled references reflect his concern for one type, namely, short-lived diplomatic agreements. Often he reports forsworn compacts, an element of his claim that the war caused a steep decline in Hellenic values.

II. HERODOTUS

The two historians examine institutions, facts, and interpretations from different directions, and oath furnishes one example. Herodotus—'father of history—father of fables and lies' as Cicero and Vives characterize him—seriously and methodically separated himself from his identified reporters and their reports. While Dewald and Marincola (2006: 5) helpfully characterize his text as a 'repository of ways of thinking, speaking, and writing' that arose from 'traditional Greek cultural codes', an examination of oaths in his text also reveals an aggressive analytical presentation (*apodexis*) raising fifth-century

gods before whom humans swore oaths varied by city, sex, age, even class, as e.g. Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusai* makes clear (Ziebarth 1905, 2076; cf. Stengel 1898, 78–80). The comic poets produce many oaths (Sommerstein and Fletcher 2007, 125–37). [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 55.5 offers examples of Athenian oaths; other passages describe oath takers: jurors, arbitrators, ephebes, archons, the *boule*, the cavalry, litigants, witnesses, and amnesty-participants (39.1).

⁹ Sommerstein (in Sommerstein and Fletcher 2007), 2 offers a similar definition, but one cannot always ascertain the presence of an oath in our texts, or how formal an oath was (e.g. the swearing 'by Zeus' is often similar to the English expletive 'God damn it'). The specific words of oaths, including benedictions and maledictions, so important to get precisely right in religious and secular (judicial) ritual, rarely appear in the *Histories* or other historiographical sources.

¹⁰ Callaway (1993) counts twenty-six scenes of oath in the two Homeric epics, fifteen with a 'call to witness'. Cf. Lateiner (2011).

questions about these codes. He addresses political and intellectual issues such as imperialism, the dynamic of Persian expansionism, divine interference, and personal obligations. Collecting and sorting conflicting narratives, evaluating alleged facts and factoids, Herodotus produced a challenging account of the previous apocalyptic century, including both traditional and sceptical treatments of oaths.

Herodotus records approximately forty oaths of three types—ethnic customs, an element in inter-state treaties, and individuals' crises of credibility.¹¹ The first of these categories records ethnic habits, reflecting Herodotus' enthusiasm for describing exotic oriental modes.

(1) Barbarian 'natural' customs differ from Hellenic mores, and thus *ipso facto* become noteworthy (e.g. the Arabs' oath ceremonies, 3.7.8). The proto-anthropologist describes standard operating oath procedures that 'exotic' peoples employ to certify truths and facts, and to contract future acts. Herodotus describes the Nasamonians in Libya (Africa), for example, who swear by those ancestors who were most righteous and brave, and they lay hands upon their tombs as they swear (4.172.3).¹² They exchange pledges by drinking from the hand of each other; if lacking potation, they lick dust. The Scythians swear major oaths by the hearth of the king. If he falls ill, the royal house summons diviners to discover whichever man has been false in his oath (4.68.2).

Herodotus' most elaborate anthropological descriptions of oath ceremony concern Arab pledges and certain Scythian oaths (3.7–8,

¹¹ Not all elements of an oath (declaration, specification of divine guarantor, curse) appear in Herodotus' or other accounts of covenants where one might expect oaths. Not always does a performative use of a verb of oath swearing appear, as in vows, truces, treaties, and alliances. The commonest Greek verb for swearing in Herodotus is ὀμνυμι (12×) with four prefixed compounds (ten more examples). For making someone swear an oath, the verb is ἐξορκῶ (4×). The nouns for oaths are ὄρκος (13×) and ὄρκιον (27×) usually found in the plural ὄρκια—with no apparent difference in meaning. For curses, Herodotus uses the noun κατάρη three times and the verb ἐπαρώμην (at 3.75.3; cf. Enoch Powell's indispensable *Lexicon to Herodotus*). The Nottingham 'oath project' refers to truces and various alliances (συμμαχίη, e.g. 1.21, 22; 5.99), where oaths must be assumed.

¹² The kings of Thrace swear by their Hermes alone, from whom they claim descent (5.7.1). Herodotus names certain deities and heroes by whom non-Greek persons or groups, or a Greek pretending fealty, swear. Tomyris swears by the sun (1.212), the Nasamonians by touching the tombs of the righteous (4.172), the Scythians by the king's hearth (4.68), the Thracian kings by their Hermes (5.7), the slippery Hellene Histiaeus, in Persian employ (see below), by the Persian people's divinities (5.106). The united Greeks seem once to swear by Apollo (7.132), offering him dedicatory tithes, if they be victorious. Elsewhere Herodotus never mentions the Greek powers invoked.

4.70). Pricking or cutting their own skin to procure a little blood, the Scyths pour wine and this human blood into a large vessel, and into this bowl they dip a sword, arrows, battleaxe, and javelin. Then they invoke curses on any oath breaker, and together drink up the contents. The Arab pledge also involves drops of blood. Inflicting body cuts, as the Lydians, Medes, Scyths, and Arabs do (1.74, 3.8, 4.70), sanctifies oaths (potent urine added at 3.11, 4.70). Solemn Hellenic oaths include animal blood sacrifice. The Homeric phrase ‘cutting oaths’ implies a demand for the blood of an animal or symbolic human sacrifice. ‘The unpalatable mixture of blood and wine is one of the elements that carries . . . the oath, and binds those who make contact with it . . .’ (Steiner 1994, 64).¹³

The richest passage for non-Hellenic pledge procedures appears before Cambyses’ invasion of Egypt. Herodotus offers this ethnographic and generic description of the Arab way of oath when Cambyses’ envoys ask for an Arab chieftain’s pledges of safe passage for his army and for friendship (3.7.2). Then, Herodotus describes the standard Arab form of pledging in the present or anthropological tense (*τὰ πιστὰ ποιεέσθαι*). A mediator cuts the flesh of the two parties, smears stones with a bit of their blood on both their cloaks, and calls the gods Orotalt and Alilat to witness. The description of the *pledge* ritual seems much like Herodotus’ ethnographic accounts of *oath* rituals elsewhere, e.g. the Nasamonians’ ceremonies (4.172.3–4), but in that passage the procedures for oath and pledge are distinguished or at least narrated separately. When Herodotus ends his ethnographic ‘digression’ on present-day Arab oaths, he recapitulates the preceding historical narrative and returns to the historical moment after an aorist and a perfect verb form: ‘once the Arab king gave his pledge of friendship to Cambyses’ envoys who had come . . .’ (3.9.1: *ἀπιγμένοισι ἐποιήσατο*).

In an area closer to the Greek homelands, non-Greek Carian wives of the Ionian conquerors of Anatolia—after the murder of their parents, husbands, and children (1.146.3) forced new, distressing marriages on them—long ago swore an oath amongst themselves never to eat with their new husbands or to call them by name. This gendered oath is surprising in content as well as because of its

¹³ The grotesque potation of children’s blood in the Greek and Carian mercenaries’ suicide oath in Egypt (3.11) pressured inclusion. Herodotus eschews descriptions for the typical oath ceremonies of Greek truce-making, treaties, and legal agreements, since his audiences were Greek (cf. 1.74).

exclusively female organization and application. The intransigent women's oath constitutes a sudden onomastic silence that became an astounding marital custom. This report of female determination feeds a Hellenic taste for scanning and weighing exotic Otherness in race and gender. Greeks might have incorrectly expected oath habits to be universal, but the facts are emphatically otherwise. Herodotus reports minor as well as major wonders, including native voices and female pitches. Unexpected ethnic oath habits provide one category of exotic voices, indices of alterity or 'barbarity'.¹⁴

Among his ethnographic data (category 1, still), Herodotus thirteen times records *πιστά*, oath-like 'pledges' or assurances. *Pista* refer, presumably, to deals cut and perhaps securities for good behaviour.¹⁵ These assurances can differ from oaths (*horkoi*) that bring the gods to bear as witnesses and guarantors. The two words, however, and not surprisingly, appear together in oath contexts.¹⁶ Indeed, Greek occasionally uses *horkia* to refer to treaties, understanding this significant *pars* as *pro toto*.

Greeks, like barbarians, suffer other peoples' ethnographic misunderstandings. Cyrus alleges that Greeks forswear themselves while engaged in deceitful business practices (1.153.1: ἀλλήλους ὀμνύντες ἐξαπατῶσι). The Persian autocrat's observation clearly condemns his Spartan interlocutors' oath-keeping along with the rest of the Greeks' (ταῦτα ἐς τοὺς πάντας Ἑλλήνας ἀπέρριψε . . . τὰ ἔπεα), one example of ethnic prejudice among many.¹⁷ Herodotus

¹⁴ Munson (2001), 141–56, 235–65. At 1.93.1, Hdt. uses *θώματα* for buildings and natural features although not for customs, but 2.35.2 refers to Egypt's *πλείστα θωμάσια καὶ ἔργα* and its *πολλὰ πάντα ἔμπαλιν . . . ἥθεά τε καὶ νόμοι*.

¹⁵ *Pistis* is herself a goddess, although now long departed from earth, as the disenchanted elegist Theognis reports (*El.* 1137). *Pistios* is an epithet of Zeus, like *horkios* (*Soph. Phil.* 1324, cf. *D. Hal. Rom. Ant.* 4.58.4).

¹⁶ See e.g. Hdt. 3.74.2, 9.92.1, 9.106.4, noted and discussed below. Xenophon, some three decades later, records an analogous oath situation with analogous language. The mercenary Greek troops and the chief lieutenants of the Persian commander Ariaaios swear (*ὤμωσαν* [2×], *προσώμωσαν*) an oath of alliance with sacrificial *sphagia* of three animals and then dip all their weapons in the animals' blood (2.2.4). In the next sentence, Xenophon refers to the ceremony thus: *ἐπεὶ δὲ τὰ πιστά ἐγένετο*, suggesting the semantic overlap of oaths and pledges.

¹⁷ The immediate targets are, ironically, the envoy Lacrines and his countrymen, uncommercial Lacedaemonians. Cyrus' sneer seems egregiously ignorant, since he directs it at Spartans who themselves sneer at commerce. But later Herodotean tales of Spartans swearing misleadingly make the jibe seem more appropriate. Self-confident misapprehension typically characterizes Herodotus' often under-informed, uncontradictable autocrats.

elsewhere too (e.g. 1.90; 7.101–4, 208–9) presents a prominent barbarian criticizing Hellenic habits or puncturing their proud claims. Their points are sometimes valid, although Herodotus implies the compatibility of market-swindling and military success.

(2) The most numerous Herodotean category (twenty-one explicit oaths) appears in situations when representatives of states or factions ratify covenants, treaties of non-aggression, alliance, or subjection (e.g. Zancleans and Samians, 6.23). Herodotus skimps on *ipsissima verba*, details that Thucydides unexpectedly provides when he appears to quote treaty oaths and specify oath takers.¹⁸ The earlier historian assumes his (Greek) readers' knowledge of Greek diplomatic habits, as the latter assumes other 'common knowledge', such as the nature of hoplite and trireme warfare, Greek economic conditions, and constitutional practices.

(3) Herodotus' third major category of oaths, sworn during individuals' dramatic crises, includes both non-deceptive and deceptive oaths. Here, Herodotus presents critical scenes of questionable historicity that culminate in an outcome-shaping oath. Oaths can seduce participants to under-negotiate difficult and complex transactions (e.g. the Cyrene agreement, see below). Some oaths formally or informally strengthen an otherwise dubious promise such as Tomyris' to Cyrus, Atossa's to Democedes, or Xerxes' blind commitment to Artaxerxes at the end (1.212, 3.133, and 9.109). Some men devise creative but flagrant evasions of reasonable expectations for oath events. These last oaths aim to reassure falsely the other party. The apparently obvious outcome may not apply, in the upshot, and the hidden hook may be decisive. This last class of oaths with deceptive intent or non-execution for personal gain especially excites Herodotus' literary imagination and attention.¹⁹

Herodotus' task, to preserve great and wondrous *erga*, admits, and his *logos* demands, that he include accounts of personal roguery and state deceptions. Many *erga* depend on oaths. Providing greater contextual detail than he does for other oaths, Herodotus recounts several extraordinary examples of cleverness and trickery, in and by oath. Ionians like Histiaeus, Dorians like Ariston, and Persians like Prexaspes and Amasis, the Persian commander at Barca in North

¹⁸ e.g. 5.18–19: Mekiyrnaians; 23–4: names of ephor Pleistolas and all signatories; 8.58 'plain of the Maeander'.

¹⁹ ἀπάτη, 9x: 3.74, 3.79, 4.154, 6.62; denial of deceit in alliance parlance: 1.69, 8.140a, 9.7a; no oath: 1.187, 6.136.

Africa, successfully manipulate the 'fair' rules and expectations of oath and oath procedures for duplicitous motives.²⁰ Oaths are good to deceive with.

The trickster Histiaeus fomented the Ionian Revolt, but prudently denied his role to King Darius. He asked Darius to send him down to the Ionian coast and promised to capture the rebel Aristagoras. 'When I have done this after your mind, I swear by the gods of the royal house that I will not put off the clothes I wear until I have made Sardinia, the largest island,²¹ tributary to you' (5.106.5–6: θεοὺς ἐπόμνυμι τοὺς βασιλείους). Herodotus terms this oath by barbarian gods an attempt (and a successful one) to deceive the king and escape (5.107: ταῦτα διέβαλλε).²²

Prexaspes the Persian and the Magi took pledges and swore oaths (3.74.2: πίστι τε λάβοντες καὶ ὀρκίοισι) to profit mutually from their royal fraud²³—installing their false Smerdis. But Prexaspes always intended to double-cross the imposter regicides. After exposing the aliens, he calls down curses on his compatriots (Πέρσησι δὲ πολλὰ ἐπαρησάμενος), if they will not fight to regain autonomy. For Herodotus, his *in extremis* lack of real choices probably exculpates, or at least palliates, his intentional lie on oath. Persian 'patriotism' excuses the perjury.

The quirkiest state-exchanged oaths concern the long Persian siege and conquest of African Barca, west of Cyrene (c.512; 4.201.2–3, oath words 5×: ὄρκια, ὄρκιον, ἐμπεδορκεῖον, τάμοντες, μένειν αἰεὶ

²⁰ Camerer (1965), Lateiner (1990), Wheeler (1984, for treaties), Harrison briefly (2000, 109 n. 24), and Bolmarcich (2007) discuss Hellenic oath deceits and preventive measures. Wheeler (1984) 254, 259 examines epigraphical and historiographical 'anti-deceit' clauses and the understood concept of the ὄρκος σοφιστικός, hopefully forestalled by ἄνευ τε δόλου καὶ ἀπάτης (1.69.2, 8.140a.4, 9.7a). Bolmarcich (2007), 31–8 persuasively argues that the anti-deceit clauses remained open to different interpretations by the two parties. An 'intentional elasticity' benefited any state summoned to aid a sworn ally.

²¹ While Sardinia is not the largest Mediterranean island, this promise counts as one of the swindler Histiaeus' lesser falsehoods, since Sardinia is indeed the second largest Mediterranean island. Other sources claimed that it was larger than Sicily, as Macan notes (*Comm.* 1895, ad loc.).

²² Burkert (1985), 446 n. 28 argued that the twisty Hellene uniquely swears by or to alien, *Persian* gods in order to render his extravagant oath harmless, precisely so that he may decline to execute without penalty. Had he sworn by his Hellenic gods, those deities would have punished the forsworn oath.

²³ Charges and countercharges of perjury and sacrilege are a frequent feature of Hellenic diplomatic exchanges. Hornblower (2007), 139–40 mentions Thucydides' amused discussion of the Peloponnesians' propagandistic interjection of the curse of the Alcmaeonids and the Athenian counterpoint of the Spartan curse of Tainaron.

τὸ ὄρκιον). Amasis, the Persian commander of the king's forces, observed that guile was necessary to supplement force (δόλῳ δὲ αἵρετοί). So he devised a ploy (μηχανάται τοιάδε). He dug a trench and covered it, and invited the Barcaians to parley. He persuaded them, while located over the bridged trench, to 'cut' oaths. The two parties swore that so long as (a condition) the earth under them remained firm, the treaty (ὁμολογίη) would continue—ἔστ' ἂν . . . οὕτως ἔχῃ . . . Depending on a geographical stability lodged in a formula of impossibility, the Barcaians opened their gates, but the Persians then destroyed the hidden bridge and trench. In this story, the Persians attacked and captured the city, but the aggressors kept their oaths (ἵνα ἐμπεδορκέοιεν—*hapax*)—the earth *has* moved. The imputed automatic efficacy of the self-curse in the oath, the clause imprecating oath breakers had been derailed, since the unexpected fulfilment of the wily conditional clause freed the Persians from divine penalty.

Herodotus expresses no judgement. This military subterfuge does not gain his explicit praise, but neither does he condemn it. He openly admires Themistocles' tricky, alleged inscription that makes the Ionians' naval contingents suspect to their Persian commanders after the battle of Artemisium, and also his deceptive epistolary stratagem for dividing the Persian fleet before Salamis (8.22 and 75), whether or not historical.²⁴ He admires ruses, improvisation, and ingenious calculation.²⁵ Herodotus anticipates Thucydides in

²⁴ Greeks admired tricky perversions of the truth, omissions, and outright lying. This is especially true if, like the Maraphian Persian commander Amasis and Laconian Ariston, the guileful party need not actually break the letter of his oath to gain his end. The party with whom the oath is sworn may not have attended to the particulars, and then thinks itself swindled when the deception is revealed. The weasel 'let-out' clauses and the unnoticed literal interpretation bear witness to folkish Greek roguery. For example, the divinities Hera and Hermes in 'Homer' and the 'Homeric' Hymns (*Il.* 15.36–40; *h.Herm.* 4.274–6, 383–4) clearly misrepresent acts they have committed. Arguably, however (Callaway 1993, 21, 24; Gagarin 2007, Fletcher 2008), they have not committed perjury, since they offer to swear *in futuro*, that is, do not in fact swear those oaths and so do not perform the utterance (as found in 'I thee wed'). Cf. the polis's legal release of potential perjurers who had sworn prior oaths of conspiracy in *stasis*-wracked Thasos: Meiggs and Lewis (1969), *Inscr.* #83, I. 4–6.

²⁵ Lateiner (1990), 232–3 discusses 'deceptions and delusions' in the *Histories*, here the Persians' African campaign and Themistocles' ruses. The Spartan strategy to conquer starving Plataea early in the Peloponnesian War features further hair-splitting, Pharisaical literalism. Their planned trick is to have their starving victims covenant 'willingly' with their enemies rather than surrender when captured. Thus the Spartans can avoid having to restore the town by later treaty, in case return to the

praising Themistocles as being *euboulos* (8.110: *hapax*; cf. Thuc. 1.138: *κράτιστος . . . αὐτοσχεδιάζειν τὰ δέοντα*).

Tricksters too are tricked, deservedly hoisted by their own petards. Etearchus, the Dorian king of Cretan Oaxos, according to the Cyrenaean version, devised an unholy deed against his daughter Phronime (4.154, *ἔργον οὐχ ὅσιον ἐμηχανάτο*). On her hostile stepmother's false information—*πάν ἐπ' αὐτῇ μηχανωμένη*—King 'Early Ruler' wrongly accuses his daughter, 'Prudence', of lecherous promiscuity. He persuades a visiting, unsuspecting guest-friend, the merchant Themison ('Mr. Right'—all these telltale names suggest a folk tale) of Dorian Thera, to swear a 'blank-cheque' oath to do his bidding (*ἐπὶ ξεινία ἐξορκοὶ ἦ μὲν . . .*). After the oath, the king instructs him to dump his own princess-daughter into the sea, wanting someone else to drown her for alleged sexual promiscuity. The unwitting, duped oath-victim, 'infuriated by the oath and breaking off at once the guest-friendship' (*περιημεκτήςας τῇ ἀπάτῃ τοῦ ὅρκου καὶ διαλυσάμενος τὴν ξεινίην*), complies, but with the letter only.

He must avoid the self-enabled penalty for perjury, one inflicted by the magical, automatic power of oath process. To *fulfil* his oath, he mock-drowns the young woman in the sea but to *evade* it, he immediately pulls her up and rescues her. Themison remained *εὖορκος*, a 'good oath' man (cf. 6.86γ.2 bis, discussed below), afterwards landing the innocent woman safely at Thera. He honours his obligation to oath (avoiding perjury), but serves a higher justice. Themison 'does right' and by sophisticated *pied de la lettre* compliance evades a greater wrong.

Herodotus' three most elaborate oath tales feature otherwise admirable Dorians, indeed Spartan, protagonists: King Ariston, his son Demaratus, and Glaucus—esteemed above all men for just dealings (6.86.2: *ἀκούειν ἄριστα δικαιοσύνης πέρι πάντων*). Ariston, the Spartan king, his beautiful wife (*καλλίστη μακρῶ*), and their son, Dem-Aratus, the 'People-Prayed-For', live under a cloud of dubious oaths. This situation arose from an unusual oath leading to Ariston's marriage, the mother's seven-month pregnancy, and a

status quo ante was part of an Athenian-Spartan agreement—as it was (Thuc. 3.52.2, cf. 4.118, 122; 5.18, 21, etc.). Hornblower (2007), 138–47 examines Theban and Spartan accusations of perjury. Camerer (1965) and Dewald (1993) productively discuss ingenuity in the *Histories*.

second, hastily sworn denial of paternity.²⁶ The Spartan king Ariston and his friend Agetus exchange oaths. Each swears to give the other whatever possession the other demands. Agetus got some unidentified valuable whatnot, royal treasure (6.62.2: ὅτι δὴ ἦν). Ariston, however, demanded his best friend's wife. Herodotus labels the king's legalistic subterfuge a παραγωγή, a 'treacherous deception'. He gains her because of oath's compelling power (6.62.2: ἀναγκαζόμενος μέντοι τῷ τε ὄρκῳ καὶ τῆς ἀπάτης τῇ παραγωγῇ ἀπίει ἀπάγεσθαι).²⁷ This blind oath embodies one facet of the complex 'problematics of [Hellenic] reciprocity' (Braund 1998, 172).

His successful 'blank-cheque' oath and his prize, a fertile wife, destroy his prayed-for son, Demaratus. After Demaratus' premature birth, Ariston swore before the ephors a negative oath²⁸ stating that the seven-month child could *not* be his son.²⁹ Subsequently, however, his wife on oath managed to convince him otherwise. His wife had deduced and explained to her husband that she had welcomed to bed on the night of conception (like Alcmene, mother of Heracles) two Ariston-like visitors, namely Astrabacus,³⁰ an unusual local hero resident in a neighbouring cult-shrine, *and* her husband. Years later,

²⁶ The Spartans' imbricated oath stories produce the most complex oath and curse sequence in Herodotus. The infertile (?) King Ariston dives into family-destroying mischief by way of anomalous oath practice. Ariston's sworn deal with his best friend remains binding—even if outrageous—in the primitive view. Supernatural elements suggest to historians (Macan 1895; Seeberg 1966; Burkert 2001; Ogden 1996, 1997; etc.) that the story is improving fable or simple political propaganda against Demaratus. Aly (1921), 156–8 notes other folk-tale elements in the Spartan *Demarat-Komplex* (e.g. long-awaited offspring, appearance of a lusting god—as in the *Amphitryon* myth).

²⁷ Capricious courtships and irregular marriages populate Herodotus' presentation (or the reality) of the Spartan dyarchy. See Millender (2002), 13–17; Ogden (1997), 111, 125–7.

²⁸ 6.65.3: ἀπώμωσε; cf. the echo at 6.63.2, otherwise only 2.179.

²⁹ The seven months that had passed since they had cohabited, he reasoned—reckoning the count upon his fingers—made his paternity impossible. His once lovely wife does not deny to her son, many years later, that his father once blurted out this oath of disclaimer in the hearing of many, including several ephors. Nevertheless, she denies *his* knowledge (ἀἰδρεῖν) of pregnancy. Ariston had soon acknowledged his folly or bad accounting (6.69.5: ἀνοίην).

³⁰ Either King Ariston or the shadowy Spartan hero Astrabacus was his father—and neither, she questionably alleges, was a shameful one (6.69). Pausanias (3.16.6) provides additional details about this epichoric oddity. Seeberg (1966), Burkert (2001), and Ogden (1997), 94–112 illuminate the parochial buffoon/hero Astrabacus, a lame lecher-demon. He was 'not a particularly desirable parent for a king of Sparta'. His 'sworn' enemy, King Cleomenes, probably started this hare; cf. Seeberg (1966), 62–3.

however, Demaratus' cousin and rival, Leotychides,³¹ citing Ariston's oaths before the ephors, successfully has them remove the popular figure from power.³²

Later, at the Naked Boys' Festival, Leotychides, king in Demaratus' place, mocked and insulted demoted Demaratus.³³ He left the public theatre in angry shame, pulling a cloth over his head. Arriving home, he sacrificed a bull to Zeus Herkios prior to questioning his mother under oath.³⁴ Putting the ox innards (σπλάγχνα) in her hands,³⁵ he investigates his paternity. Under Zeus-solemnified oath, she claimed to provide *πάν . . . τῶληθές*. She had solemnly affirmed (κατωμύμην) her chastity to Ariston, but admitted she might have first mistakenly had sex with an imposter, Astrabacus, the parochial raunchy hero-daemon referred to above. Following her sworn testimony, Demaratus left Laconia. The legitimacy of offspring provides a sensitive test of every woman's credibility and trustworthiness, but the historical facts are ultimately unknowable, as Herodotus implies. A deceptive oath exchange enabled Ariston's marriage and, perhaps, Demaratus' conception. Two other problematic oaths condemn his

³¹ Leotychides hated his enthroned cousin, not least because Demaratus had previously plotted *harpage*, abduction marriage, and successfully stolen Leotychides' fiancée, Perkalos (6.65.2). See Lateiner (1997), esp. 410–11, for abduction marriage. On the connection between the goofy hero Astrabacus and muleteers, see Burkert (2001), 100; Ogden (1996), 256–8, (1997), 111–12.

³² The Spartans regarded Demaratus, already an athletic hero (6.70.3), as outstanding (ἀπολαμπρυνθείς). This divine paternity could make him 'heroic' in a less flattering way (as the probably malicious alternative about his birth implies, 6.69.4).

³³ ἐπὶ γέλωτί τε καὶ λάσθῃ: a strong, unusual phrase for abusive and humiliating behaviour. Spartans gloried both in gloating and in savagely teasing each other. David (1989), Halliwell (1991), and Francis (1991/1993) describe Spartan competitive insults, 'dissing'.

³⁴ Zeus *Herkios* (6.67–8) denotes the Guardian of the Household Enclosure, but *if* both ἑρκ- and ὄρκ- are derived from the same stem, as Eustathius and LSJ claim, he would be Guardian of the Oath as well (Eust. ad *Il.* 3.328; cf. *Etymologicum Magnum*, s.v. ὄρκος, with the agreement of Frisk, but Benveniste differs). Chantraine (1999), 820–1 denies any connection.

³⁵ The *Eidopfer* marks the mother as participating in, not merely observing, the sacrifice. She is now effectively 'on oath' (a truth 'ordeal'). His mother (6.62.1) non-verbally sanctifies her response to the 'Oath or Boundary Zeus'. Although no 'oath' word appears in this oath event, she holds a ritual offering, animal innards, and the intent is clear (cf. *Il.* 3.268–301, 19.258–65 and Athenian extra-judicial ritual procedures). His supplication (ἵκετεύω and λίται) includes the words ἀληθείην, ὀρθῶ λόγῳ, ματαιότερον λόγον, τ' ὠληθές. Plescia (1970), Cole (1996), and Faraone (1999) discuss Athenian oath legalities. Faraone (2005) calls the act of holding or standing on the animal parts 'mutilation'.

birth as illegitimate, and two more maternal examples affirm his royal, legitimate paternity.

Leotychides became king, the very man who had benefited from Ariston's hasty oath concerning Demaratus. Herodotus soon has this dubious source narrate to Athenians an improving legend, Herodotus' most explicitly didactic oath-tale.³⁶ This cautionary tale (6.86) dramatically recounts the eradicating punishment of the once honest Spartan Glaucus. According to Leotychides' fable, a rich Milesian once came to stable Sparta and entrusted half his fortune to Glaucus, renowned for his justice (*δικαιοσύνη*), together with a broken token (*σύμβολα*). Much later, the Milesian's sons arrived asking to retrieve their father's substantial 'deposit', bringing the split token that matched those [the one?] left with Glaucus. Glaucus first denied any recollection of the transaction, since, Herodotus avers, he had decided to keep the wealth. Glaucus, ready to swear an oath that he had never received the money, then (6.86γ.1) asked the Delphic oracle 'whether he should rob them of the money by an oath'.³⁷ Glaucus' premeditated perjury had no conceivable defence, unlike Themison or Ariston's clever ad hoc oath fulfilments.

The Pythia's response acknowledges that Glaucus can 'win by oath' (*ὄρκῳ νικῆσαι*), but announces that such a victory will be short-lived. She personifies Oath as a goddess. She now informs Glaucus that Oath possesses a monstrous son: 'one nameless and handless and footless'.³⁸ 'Wholly he [Oath's son] shall destroy the race and the house of the man who offendeth' [against Hellenic rules of Oath]. The oracle also declares that to consider forswearing an oath suffices to condemn that thinker and eradicate his house.³⁹ Glaucus then made full restitution—already too late. No descendants,

³⁶ Analysts continue to disentangle the teller's political purpose from Herodotus' own purposes. See Johnson (2001), 20–4; Hornblower (2007), 140.

³⁷ Although Herodotus mentions no oath at the time of deposit or retrieval, Glaucus' plan clearly intended to swear by gods to the sons that he had received nothing and so clear himself by an oath of attestation from any claims.

³⁸ *ἀλλ' Ὀρκου παῖς ἐστὶν ἀνώνυμος, οὐδ' ἔπι χεῖρες/ οὐδὲ πόδες ...* The lightly personified leader and follower owe a debt to Hesiod and recall Phoenix's parable in *Iliad* 9 about the crippled *Litai*. Hirzel (1902), 142–9 perceives this personification as a punishing chthonic daemon (cf. Hes. *Op.* 219–20, 802–4). Aeschylus' Erinyes punish oath breaking and perjury.

³⁹ Herodotus notes the internalization of guilty feelings. Hdt. 1.159 suggests that testing the gods is inadvisable (cf. 1.46). Andocides (4.94) notably alleges that either plotting a crime or committing it receives, or deserves to receive, the same penalty.

Leotychides reports, now exist,⁴⁰ recalling Homeric dire family curses imprecated on perjurers (*Il.* 3, 19). The Glaucus tale, nevertheless, survives its own duplicitous narrator to provide Herodotus' readers with a rationale for the dominant, ferocious ideology underpinning Hellenic oaths.⁴¹

The archaic world, then, considered oath both a sacrosanct element and a social weapon. Dread of penalties for perjuring words or acts kept kings, magistrates, athletes, contracting strangers, and litigants more honest. Herodotus, however, undercuts in several ways Leotychides' parable of the oath-breaking Spartan. The Athenians ignore his moralistic, self-serving lesson. Moreover, this Spartan's own malfeasance for gain and honour (6.87, cf. 72) de-authorizes his message.⁴² Spartan oath narratives fruitfully complicate Herodotus' contrast between simple Hellenic oath ethics and sharp Hellenic practice.⁴³

Two odd oaths do not fit these three categories of exotic ethnic habits, Greek covenants, and dramatic crises. With these oaths, groups desperately attempt to persuade audiences of an improbable

⁴⁰ Even the place of his former house and hearth at Sparta became unknown. His house was destroyed utterly (*πρόρριζος*) for his disregard of oath (6.86γ.1–2: *horkos* ×4, once as a proper name). Glaucus' eradicated house might have suggested to Leotychides himself that he was subject to *tisis*, retaliation or rebalancing.

⁴¹ The 'oath-keeper' man (*εὐορκος*) appears twice in this quoted response of the Pythia, but nowhere else in Herodotus' text. Perhaps an ancient and useful example of Delphic boilerplate for intending cheats, the phrasing parallels the Hesiodic conception.

⁴² The Spartan king tries to retrieve Aeginetan hostages deposited with the Athenians. He wants to impress on them the sanctity of oaths and of returning deposits (6.86), but the Athenians had not taken an oath. Leotychides recounts this irrelevant fable to the wrong people. Further, Leotychides did not own the property in question. After several bribery accusations, the Spartans criminally investigated Leotychides and pursued him. Eventually, they exposed and deposed him for impious actions: 'fixing' a Delphic oracle and later embezzling Panhellenic funds (6.72). Herodotus alliteratively and epiphonemically concludes Leotychides' penalty tale: *τίσιν τοιγόνδε τινὰ Δημαρῆτῳ ἑξέτεισε . . . ἔφυγε . . . καὶ τὰ οἰκία οἱ κατεσκάφη*. Although Harrison (2000), 118–19 accuses the Athenians of perjury for not returning the Aeginetan hostages to the Spartans, their explanation (*προφασία*)—that two kings gave the hostages but only one came to recover them—falls within Greek parameters of contract (deposit: *παραθήκη*). Macan (1895), ad 6.86 refutes Leotychides' charge for illogicality. Moreover, few perjurers in the *Histories* (besides Leotychides!) receive punishment, and some oath manipulators like Themison (NB: telltale name) clearly gain approval.

⁴³ Lysander, the later Spartan Peloponnesian War commander, bade his men cheat children with dice and cheat men with oaths, according to his contemporary, the anti-Spartan Theban Androcleidas (Plut. *Lys.* 8.4). Such blasphemy evokes dismay from Plutarch the priest.

truth. Herodotus, the recording judge of claims (*ἱστωρ*), reports a local belief in the Scythian Neuroi's unparalleled ability to become wolves once a year. Both barbarian and transplanted Hellenic informants informally swear to the truth of their accounts of Neuroi metamorphoses—each Neuros annually becomes a wolf for several days. Herodotus rejects human transformational powers, but local informants swore it true (4.105.2): ἐμὲ μὲν νυν ταῦτα λέγοντες οὐ πείθουσι, λέγουσι δὲ οὐδὲν ἥσσον, καὶ ὄμνυσι δὲ λέγοντες. This unilateral oath uniquely sworn to Herodotus serves as a (failed) strategy of authentication, a measure to him of their credulity.⁴⁴ His own audiences were equally or more incredulous towards some of his claims (e.g. 3.80.3, 6.43.3; cf. 1.193.4, 7.139.1).

The other unilateral oath similarly seeks to confirm a disbelieved fact to an immediate audience within the recorded story. Distrustful of accounts of the distant past (e.g. 1.5.3–4 and 3.122.2: Minos), Herodotus counters the canonical version of Helen's wartime whereabouts, allegedly in Troy, with a deflationary version told by Egyptian priests (2.113–20; cf. 2.99.1). When the Achaeans demanded Helen from the besieged Anatolians, the Trojans insisted that Helen had never reached Troy. They testified both 'on oath and without one'.⁴⁵ Their desperate oath failed, so the war long continued to its brutal conclusion. Herodotus' quasi-Thucydidean analysis (cf. Thuc. 1.9–11, discounting the suitors' oaths) observes that no one would ever fight a ten-year genocidal war for one woman.

This brief survey demonstrates that Herodotus observed the potency of traditional oaths in familiar and alien societies, but he perceived that many oath takers forswear their oaths or find dubious ways to claim that they had honoured them.

III. THUCYDIDES

Oaths were essential to and decisive in ancient private and public agreements, although a minor element in bloody battle stages of international conflicts such as Thucydides records. Swearing

⁴⁴ Fehling (1989), 112–15, 122 misappropriates the story. A theriomorphic ritual of men donning wolf masks may lurk behind the weird claim.

⁴⁵ 2.118.3: τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον λέγειν τότε καὶ μετέπειτα, καὶ ὀμνύντας καὶ ἀνωμοσί—*hapax*, apparently similar to the English language idiom 'swear something up and down'.

alliances, truces, and treaties of peace demands attention in determining the Athenian historian's values, interests, and methods. Thucydides describes the failures of Hellenic political systems in the Peloponnesian War—intra-state, inter-state, among alliances, and in contentious diplomacy with barbarians.⁴⁶ Oath stories provide one 'canary in the coal mine'. Oaths and their violations delicately indicate the decline of traditional social and religious practices, as well as of traditional politics. War is a *βίαιος διδάσκαλος*, a 'violent teacher', who provides sticks such as oaths with which to threaten others.

Oaths are a traditional, even primitive, instrument of civic and diplomatic assurance,⁴⁷ and Thucydides briefly mentions a few that illustrate such standard Hellenic procedures (cf. Meiggs and Lewis 1969, #94: Akragas 405 BC). These traditional practices suffer alleged and real violations, a sign of the deterioration of their power (e.g. 2.71–2, discussed below). Useful Hellenic rituals of religion, civic discourse, and politics provide grim markers of his generation's lamentable, sudden *kinesis* and swift disintegration (e.g. 3.82–5; cf. 1.23.1: *παθήματα . . . ὅα οὐχ ἕτερα ἐν ᾧ χρόνῳ*). Finally, he quotes verbatim oaths in certain Peloponnesian War agreements, specific guaranteeing rituals described in the greatest detail, ironically just *because* these 'most binding' oaths (*μέγιστοι ὅρκοι*)—nearly as soon as signed—were not worth the papyrus and stone on which they were to be recorded (esp. 5.18, 47; cf. 4.86, 8.75). They were frequently stillborn.

Thucydides never describes covenantal procedures as the comparatist Herodotus had. He eschews other Herodotean oath opportunities such as presenting informal oaths, individual oaths, and oaths in dramatic but unverifiable incidents. Thucydides differs most from Herodotus in his selection of oath situations to describe

⁴⁶ Thucydides reports oaths sworn by four types of parties: (1) those sworn *inside* Hellenic *poleis* such as Corcyra and Athens (*stasis* at Corcyra is his announced paradigm, 3.84.1, 85.1); (2) *between* Greek *cities* such as Corinth and Corcyra or between Syracuse and restive smaller Sicilian cities (such as Leontini, Segesta, Rhegion, and Camarina); (3) *among* alliance members (such as Sparta and Corinth in the Peloponnesian League, Athens and Mytilene in the Delian League); (4) and the rare compacts relevant to his war *between ethnicities* (perhaps Ionians and Peloponnesians, Athenians and Melians, certainly Hellenes and Persians).

⁴⁷ e.g. Thucydides' Spartans recognize that victors can inflict disadvantageous oaths on a weaker party, since oaths provide a religious club that they can wield along with physical forms of force (4.19.2, 5.30: the Corinthians).

in detail and his inadequately explained documentary preservation of their *ipsissima verba*, in certain cases.

One should distinguish Thucydides' respect for certain traditional Hellenic practices, including religious ones, from his personal beliefs about, for example, organized ritual and prophecies.⁴⁸ Abuse of oaths, ugly self-serving behaviours during the Plague, and the Corcyraean Revolution produce his disapprobation. The statesman or intellectual may admire a community's practice for its political or social utility without subscribing to the theological beliefs that underlie it. For a disbeliever's parallel, Polybios explicitly approves of the machinery of Roman state religion that promoted political stability (6.56; cf. 16.12.3–11). In this vein, Thucydides reports a pointed Spartan 'religious' demand that the Athenians remove from their city the polluted Alcmaeonids—accursed for a broken oath (?) and murder (1.126–7). He affirms the Spartans' religious sincerity, but appends a sarcastic remark about their motive—signalled by the particle *δηθεν*.⁴⁹ The predominant influence of their fierce opponent Pericles was the Spartans' real concern. The Spartans hoped through this strategem to diminish or disqualify the political influence of this half-Alcmaeonid.

Thucydides deploys oaths (*horkoi*) in his narratives in three ways.⁵⁰ HORK-stems and other explicit oath words appear more than fifty times in Thucydides' text, usually in descriptions of military alliances, his typically noticed form of treaties between states. References to oath events appear 269 times (Nottingham count).⁵¹

⁴⁸ Hornblower makes this point well, e.g. (1992), and (1996), 50–1. Religion, apart from oaths, was a significant interest in the iconoclastic late fifth century: in political propaganda (e.g. the two archaic curses oppressing the Alcmaeonidae and the killers of Pausanias; the requisite purifications of Delos), and even leading to expropriation of properties before and during the war (Hornblower 1992, 182). The Athenians and Boeotians debate the sacrilege involved in armies' camping out near Delium (4.97–8). The Athenians scorn the Melians' repeated misplaced confidence, based on their piety, in divine assistance to support their autonomy (5.112–13). Thucydides shows how futile this dependence was. Nicias' expressed devotion similarly spiked upwards as his men's suffering increases.

⁴⁹ Suggesting untruth; cf. Denniston (1966), 266; on this 'opaque' narrative, Thuc. 1.127.1, see Connor (1984), 48 and Foster (2010), 127–9.

⁵⁰ The Attic historian reports no evidentiary oath sworn to himself, suppressing his investigative techniques, informants' names, and variant versions. His Hellenic focus precludes a comparative (or Herodotean) treatment of the nature of noted Persian, barbarian oaths.

⁵¹ That statistic includes each reference to an alliance, a treaty, a truce, or other events which expect oaths.

While generally dismissive of priests, prophets, cult rituals, and parochial or Panhellenic superstitions,⁵² Thucydides does sometimes record divinely grounded procedures for political oaths in oath documents from pre-history and his record of the greatest war.

(1) Thucydides briefly mentions relatively few successful civic oaths (6.72.5, 8.75) or effective international oath rituals. He ignores most oaths, even one as significant as the original ratification of the Delian League, a major event barely mentioned in the 'Fifty Years' (1.96.1; cf. *Ath. Pol.* 23.5). He reports rare species such as the Athenian symmachies with the Argives and Thessalians, in which they swear oaths of mutual loyalty and aid (1.102.4; cf. 5.38.3: Boeotians). He notes Chian-Athenian pledges made under severe Chian duress (4.51).

(2) The second category of Thucydidean oath comprises violations of old and traditional oaths between and within communities. Speakers negotiating with Sparta experience the need to remind Spartan legislative and judicial audiences that the gods had witnessed their oaths (1.71.5, 1.78.4 [a response], and 2.71.4; cf. 6.19). The Corinthians, Athenians, and Plataeans reasonably fear that the Spartans will betray sworn commitments for immediate benefits. The Spartans similarly accuse others of violating *their* oaths (e.g. 2.72, 5.30.1). Both sides expect to profit among the uncommitted by identifying oath-breaking opponents.⁵³

Thucydides caustically highlights problems of the long-standing oaths of inter-state Greek alliance at Plataea. The besieging Lacedaemonians and Boeotians and the besieged Plataeans wrangle and kill throughout two big books (2.1–7, 72–7, 3.20–4, 52–68). Thucydides' account of their conflict exhibits powerful Spartan diplomats wielding oaths against small powers.⁵⁴ He details the extended negotiations following the Thebans' 431 sneak attack on

⁵² Oost's agnostic Athenian (1975), 194–6 is preferable to Marinatos' pious believer (1981), but both confuse this historian's sympathy for traditional behaviours with an intellectual endorsement. Hornblower (1992), 182 emphasizes Thucydides' interest in religion as a facet of political propaganda.

⁵³ In a brief but telling incident (5.50), the Elians accuse the Spartans of having violated the Olympic truce of 420. The Spartans refuse to pay a huge fine (33 talents), denying they could be held guilty for slighting a truce that they claim was not declared in their presence.

⁵⁴ Cf. 4.19.2, another at Acanthus: 4.86–8 with *apate*. Mytilene and Melos provide the parallel and equally ugly Athenian paradigms, one an Athenian 'ally', the other a putatively neutral island community.

Plataea, the four years of the Peloponnesian siege, and the city's capitulation. First, a band of 300 attempt to seize Plataea in time of peace, the criminal *coup d'état* that began the war. After the Plataeans capture about 180 guerrillas, their Boeotian countrymen asserted that the Plataeans swore not to execute the invaders, now prisoners, if the Boeotians left their farms and fields alone (2.5.6). The Plataeans denied both this account and taking any oath. Thucydides rarely gives variant versions, and this example indicates his lack of confidence in the accounts of both sides. The Plataeans bring in their people and execute their prisoners.

Two years later, the Peloponnesian armies arrive to support their sworn Theban allies. The defending Plataeans remind Archidamus and the Spartans of the famous Panhellenic oaths 'of Plataea' sworn fifty years before. The Spartans rebut these oaths with counter-accusations, then invest and besiege the small polis. Before attacking the polis, Archidamus, King of Sparta, invokes the gods and heroes of Plataea in a conspicuous prayer that Thucydides reports in direct discourse. Appealing for divine support, that is, publicly asserting the justice of his cause, he claims that the Plataeans already deviated from their oath (2.71.4, 72.1, 73.3, 74.2). Thus Archidamus applies broken oaths in his attempts to justify to his fellow Spartans, their assembled allies, and even larger Hellenic publics the breaking of the Persian War's *spondai*, the present invasion, and the investment of Plataea.⁵⁵ This attempt to cancel Sparta's oath to protect Plataea does not persuade many.

Two further years later, the Plataeans, driven to starvation, surrender on terms. Plataean oaths feature a third time when the Spartans mount a bogus show trial for them. The Plataean defendants, their Boeotian accusers, and Spartan judges in the 'kangaroo court' engage in another debate about the Hellenic oaths sworn (perhaps) before and allegedly after the Persian Wars battle of Plataea, when the Boeotians, of course, had been fighting for the enemy, Persian side. According to the Plataeans, victorious Pausanias in the agora of Plataea in 479 had offered sacrifice to Zeus the Liberator and declared on oath that the town would be inviolate and independent (2.71). The desperate Plataeans appeal further to other

⁵⁵ Cf. 3.56.2, Plataeans claim additional sacrilege: offensive hostilities during a holy month and their city attacked during a time of peace. West (2003), 438–42 inconclusively discusses the Plataean oaths, the unexpected thunder, and an alleged heavy rain.

common altars and oaths (3.59.2, 63.3, 64.3), but the Spartans consider themselves released from their former covenant with the Plataeans, *ἔκσπονδοι* (3.68.1, *hapax*). The Peloponnesians execute their Plataean POWs and raze ancient Plataea to the ground, erasing the polis that they had sworn to preserve. Thucydides later reports, without endorsing this Spartan view, that the Spartans acknowledged their losses in the Archidamian War as a *tisis*, a retribution that Herodotus would recognize (3.68, with 2.71 and 7.18). Regretting their blunder more than ten years later, the Spartans realize and accept their guilt for oath breaking in attacking Plataea (7.18.2).

Thucydides juxtaposes the rapidly oscillating internal Corcyraean *stasis* to Plataea's slow reduction and destruction by external enemies. Thucydides clearly expresses distress and compassion for forsaken merciful Hellenic practices and traditions of trust. He describes the 'nasty habits', the criminality or *κακοτροπία*, thus in a balanced clause (3.83.2): *οὔτε λόγος ἔχυρος οὔτε ὄρκος φοβερός*, 'There was no firm meaning of words or [sufficiently] terrifying oath.' The firmest oaths were those sworn by criminal conspirators (cf. 6.56, 8.73.3). Ideological communities, patriotic sentiments, and the traditional sanction of rituals that promote civic and smaller group solidarity shrivelled in convulsed Corcyra, first of many poleis. Perjury and fraud in the name of gods multiplied (3.82.7), as oaths lost their lasting power, or so Thucydides thought. The featured Plataean and Corcyraean narratives exemplify the increasing dysfunction of the Hellenic polis in the Peloponnesian War.⁵⁶

Thucydides argues a steep decline in the dependability of all Hellenic oaths. He emphasizes the tragic consequences of oath's enfeebled power in civil, diplomatic, and military conflicts. He explicitly describes oaths at Corcyra as temporary weapons, weapons that became obsolete when an opportunity to seize power appeared. 'And oaths, if somewhere in fact any reconciliation occurred, held strong between the parties for the moment in the face of immediate difficulty when they had no other resource . . .' (3.82.7: *καὶ ὄρκοι, εἴ που ἄρα γένοιτο ξυναλλαγῆς ἐν τῷ αὐτίκα πρὸς τὸ ἄπορον ἐκατέρω διδόμενοι ἴσχυον οὐκ ἐχόντων ἄλλοθεν δύναμιν . . .*). An important *δέ* or balancing 'but' clause follows, since oaths no longer provided a dependable resource for trust (*πίστιν*) in situations of *stasis*.

⁵⁶ In the later Athenian *stasis* of 411, all the soldiers swore the 'greatest' oaths, that they would govern themselves democratically, *ἡ μὲν δημοκρατήσεσθαι* (8.75.2–3).

In the war, oaths served as a tool of direct persuasion. Spartans traded on their reputation for integrity when offering oaths. Thucydides reports Brasidas' shrewd liberation propaganda in northern Greece.⁵⁷ A good speaker for a Spartan (4.80.2), Brasidas informs various dithering and anxious Thraceward subjects of other powers that the Spartan authorities had sworn oaths to respect and defend the autonomy of Acanthus and other rebels from Athenian oppression (4.86.1, 87.1, 88.1: ἡ μὲν ἔσσεσθαι ξυμμάχους αὐτονόμους). Thucydides judges Brasidas' persuasive performances at Acanthus and elsewhere in the region as simply 'attractive lies' (88.1: τὸ ἐπαγωγὰ εἰπεῖν; 108. 5: ἐφορκὰ καὶ οὐ τὰ ὄντα λέγοντος). Whether or not they had sworn such oaths, the Lacedaemonian authorities sent out harmosts or governors contrary to those oaths (132.3). Having breached their allies' autonomy, they perjured their oaths (Hornblower 1996, 50). This disjunction between sworn oath promise and already intended discrepant actions exemplifies Thucydides' attraction to his fundamental word-deed, *logos-ergon*, antithesis.

After the capture of Spartans at Pylos, the authorities agree to a one-year armistice, reported with full text (4.118). This cessation infuriated Brasidas, successful in the north. He illegally brought over the Athenian dependencies Scione and Mende (4.120–30). His successes, achieved after the Truce of 422 was sworn, led to Athenian anger and counter-expeditions.⁵⁸ The deaths of Cleon and Brasidas at Amphipolis soon led to further, fully reported covenants, e.g. the One Year Armistice and the Peace of Fifty Years, concluded in 421 (4.118, 5.18). The Spartans swore to return Amphipolis under the Fifty Years' Peace. Even with Brasidas dead, however, the Spartans did not, then or ever, honour this article, a sworn commitment, showing the elasticity of their oath practices.⁵⁹

(3) The third category of oaths emphasizes their deficiencies and frequent nullity, a view conveyed by the description of numerous

⁵⁷ In Megarian Pegae (4.74), the Spartan general Brasidas futilely required the returning oligarchs to 'swear oaths with great pledges' to take no vengeance (ὀρκώσαντες πίστεσι μεγάλας μηδὲν μνησικακήσειν).

⁵⁸ This sworn truce anticipates my third category—stillborn covenants.

⁵⁹ They also abandoned Torone to its sad fate (5.3.4) and Mende. The Athenians destroyed Scione and executed the defending males (5.32.1). In understated irony, Thucydides records that the Athenians gave over the emptied town to their allies, the stateless Plataeans, who had suffered a similar fate at Spartan hands, six years earlier (427 BCE).

back-and-forth embassies, unhappy negotiations, and ill-conceived treaties. The first of Thucydides' nearly 300 references to oath (1.9.1) refers to the legendary Oath of the Suitors. The active denigrator of the power of distant times refers to it—but only to deny immediately its force. Even if the oath and expedition were historical, he says, fear of Agamemnon's power (*δύναμις*), not respect for this oath, brought the Achaeans to Troy (1.9.4). Negotiations and oath events populate and punctuate the 'speechless' books 5 and 8, where hostile parties stumble through three provisional versions of an awkward alliance struck between clumsily manoeuvring Spartans and artful Tissaphernes for Persia—to no better result (8.17–18, 37, 57–8). Thucydides describes oaths and oath-taking procedures sixty-eight times in the often telegraphically condensed book 5. These many treaties, shortlived directives but quoted in full, record the grievances, horse-trading, and the futile—if novel—jockeying of major and minor powers. All these agreements fail soon after—except only one between Argos and Athens that barely gains mention—but that is their significance.⁶⁰ The oath now held out only feeble hopes.

Thucydides apparently transcribes original documents with diplomatic detail that Herodotus never supplies. He quotes in full the covenant of 5.47, a peace treaty and alliance between the angry (*εὐθὺς δι' ὀργῆς εἰλχον*) Athenians, Argives, Mantineans, and Elians, first, the operative military and political clauses about their alliance for a hundred years,⁶¹ and then the precise details: who swears which oath, who administers it in each participating city, where the treaty will be inscribed, the words of the actual oath, and the quality of the relevant sacrificial victims—e.g. full-grown (5.47.8–11): *ὁμνύντων τὸν ἐπιχώριον ὄρκον ἕκαστοι τὸν μέγιστον κατὰ ἱερῶν τελείων. ὁ δὲ ὄρκος ἔστω ὅδε: . . .*

Oaths and full stipulations also had appeared in the One Year Armistice (4.117–19) and again in book 5 in the complicated Peace of Nicias between Athens and Sparta (5.18.1, 9; 19.2), the alliance between Athens and Sparta (5.23.4, 24.1), the alliance between the

⁶⁰ Thucydides significantly does *not* quote that treaty between Athens and Argos (5.82), but see *IG* I³86 for the text. Westlake emphasizes the utter failure of most negotiations (1971: 320, followed by Hornblower 2008, 211).

⁶¹ This treaty is a dead letter by 5.78, less than half a year later. Other treaties include renewal provisions, such as annual swearing by seventeen men in each city in the Fifty Years' Peace (5.18.10).

Boeotians, Corinthians, Megarians, and Thracians, (5.38 [ter]), the treaty between Sparta and Argos (5.77), the alliance between Sparta and Argos (5.79), and the old and new oaths sworn between Sparta and Argos and the Chalcidians (5.80.2; cf. 1.58 and 5.31).

The specified inscribing of the text on stone itself constitutes an expensive and solemnizing act (Steiner 1994, 66). Alcibiades subsequently had a P.S. carved into the bottom of the stele recording the Fifty Years' Treaty, the so-called Peace of Nicias (5.56.3). The codicil stated that 'The Spartans did not keep their oaths.'⁶² The Athenian politician made a political point, anticipating his close observer Thucydides, another Athenian general and another exile, eternally stamping the failure of this generation's abortive statecraft, its elaborate nullities.

Finally, the manipulation of oath in Thucydides, as one sign of human cunning but also of malice aforethought and atrocity, requires further consideration.⁶³ Men may think that the gods enforce oaths (Thuc. 5.30.3: [Corinthians] *θεῶν γὰρ πίστεις ὀμόσαντες*), but Thucydides knows that men compose and inflict them. Spartans in trouble after Sphacteria theorize this inherent weakness of treaties inflicted under duress (4.19.2; cf. n. 47): only generous conditions can end serious enmities, not 'forcing a trapped opponent to swear to a disadvantageous treaty'. Men designed oath clauses that assist states like Camarina (6.52) to avoid unwelcome obligations. Diplomats created 'let out' clauses, such as the Corinthians' 'if the gods and heroes do not prevent' (5.30 bis: *ἤν μὴ θεῶν ἢ ἡρώων κώλυμα ᾖ*). These conditional phrases allow states to reject unwelcome claims on their services (Bolmarcich 2007). To stay faithful to one's oath and to the gods, to be *εὐορκοί* in Delphic terms (5.30), always remained subject to each sovereign state's self-serving interpretations.⁶⁴

As mentioned above, in 415 the Spartans come to think that their losses in the Ten Year War had been just retribution for war guilt. They, or Thucydides, here alone use the rare word *paranomema*—

⁶² 5.56.3: *Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ Ἀλκιβιάδου πείσαντος τῇ μὲν Λακωνικῇ στήλῃ ὑπέγραψαν ὅτι οὐκ ἐνέμειναν οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι τοῖς ὅρκοις. . .*

⁶³ Hornblower (2007) discusses the Plataean example. Thucydides mentions many deceptions in combat situations, usually without moral judgement, for example Hermocrates' effective retardation of the Athenians' retreat from Syracuse (7.73.3).

⁶⁴ 6.88.2; cf. 5.18.11, 23.6, 29.2, 30.3, 42, 54.

criminal infraction (7.18.2–3). The unusually reflective or superstitious Spartans, or Thucydides, chose to avoid the term of pre-Herodotean and Herodotean consequence, *tisis*—(divine) retribution.⁶⁵ As usual, when theology is involved, Thucydides eschews in his own analysis what he regards as the obsolescent terminology and concepts of Herodotus' political agents. The Spartans, however, thought they had 'reasonably not succeeded' (7.18: *εἰκότως δυστυχεῖν*) because they had violated oaths, those sworn at Plataea and those in the Thirty Years' Treaty.⁶⁶ The Lacedaemonians (as reported by Thucydides) sometimes think and express themselves in more Herodotean, that is, traditional, ways, even if not in Herodotean vocabulary. But here, unexpectedly Herodotean vocabulary (*ἀμαρτάνω*, *δυστυχέω*) and thought patterns suggest Thucydides' unsympathetic—and ironic—attitude towards their logic. Spartans depend on the power of oaths, but their peculiar code often allows them cheerfully to manipulate them—no more attractive an attitude here than when murdering helots under oaths (Thuc. 4.80; cf. Plut. *Lyc.* 28). Thus two students of the human and communal oath business have portrayed oath takers under stress. Indeed, oath usually arises in stressful, unstructured predicaments.

IV. CONCLUSION

Both Herodotus and Thucydides frequently deem oath events worthy to record. They both mention civic oaths of large and small communities in significant civil commotion. They present deceptive stratagems with, or by, oath.⁶⁷ Oath in theory should help to align otherwise uneasy Hellenic parties, and sometimes it so functioned.

⁶⁵ *Tisis* never appears in Thucydides, but occurs fourteen times in Herodotus' text.

⁶⁶ The Athenians superstitiously thought similarly in 421 BCE about another incident, supposing that they had committed another form of sacrilege. In consequence, they restored the Delians to their island sanctuary (5.32.1). Finally, the Athenian *strategos* Nicias *in extremis* claims that the Athenians have suffered enough for wrongs and have been sufficiently punished by any offended gods (7.77). His speech, uniquely noted for its obsolescent language and thought, is saturated with antiquated concepts formerly expressed by Herodotean autocrats.

⁶⁷ Thucydides presents the examples of Themistocles duping the Spartans, young Alcibiades duping the Spartan embassy to Athens, and the experienced Alcibiades simultaneously double-duping both Tissaphernes and his momentarily fellow Athenian oligarchs (1.90–3, 5.43–6, 8.45–50).

Oaths attain historians' inclusion, though, when they cannot be successfully 'cut', τέμνειν, when they are violated, or when their very observance multiplies havoc and mayhem. Oath observance frequently indexes individual and community (in)coherence.

Herodotus records variations of human oaths among many nations. While Thucydides might have dwelt on Persian oath practice, he says nearly nothing about it. Herodotus features ingenious individuals' deceptions and comic tales of tricksters' manipulation of oath's binding power. Both historians record examples of the ubiquitous oaths that seal treaties between sovereign states. These documents of state could constrain the strategic planning and conduct of their respective foreign policies. Thucydides, unlike Herodotus, chose to record the *ipsissima verba* of sworn commitments, although the point here was frequently to show the emptiness of these words. Thucydides' illustrations of the 'bankruptcy of Greek statesmanship' (Westlake 1971, 323) exposed oath's creaky divine machinery. Both writers draw attention to the Spartans' greater respect for oaths and their greater willingness to manipulate oaths, observing the letter and trashing the spirit.⁶⁸

We have examined oaths in their histories—cases that raise ethical issues in oath-bound situations, civic and personal. Oath, a social institution and weapon, provides another dimension by which men and authorities establish rank, demonstrate cleverness and foolishness, and manipulate reciprocal commitments both by keeping and abrogating them. Oath, like boundary-testing battle, but in another area of human ingenuity and perseverance, tests human capacities to construct and limits to preserve. The two historians demonstrate both the poetics and problematics of oaths.

Ephemeral opportunities always limit the success rate of both declarative and promissory oaths. Thucydides' narratives stress the unpredictable consequences (τὸ ἀδόκητον, τὸ ἀπροσδόκητον) of many operations, political, military, and oath-taking. While quick-thinking improvisors sometimes manage unexpected outcomes successfully, Thucydides especially emphasizes failures of planning, including the nullity of many reported oaths. Promissory oaths commit to the future, and the consequences exhibit the tight limits to predictive success. Fallible human intelligence attempts to plan

⁶⁸ The criticism occurs in Attic conversation (Ar. *Ach.* 307–8).

strategically, but even when men figure out (by λογισμός) all the ricochets of their carefully chosen words in oaths, they do not anticipate the weather, much less battle outcomes.

Lacedaemonian ambassadors, desperate for their POWs' return in summer 425, reasonably assert to the Athenian assembly that states must end great enmities by generosity and moderate demands, not by pointed revenge on the enemy, victory in battle, and forcibly swearing the opponent to unequal terms.⁶⁹ Either the here eloquent Spartans devised this perceptive argument (ξύμπασα γνώμη), conceivably in words such as these (ἀληθῶς λεχθέντων), in Thucydides' presence (αὐτὸς ἤκουσα), or it is an element of the historian's deeper analysis (1.22.1: περὶ τῶν αἰεὶ παρόντων τὰ δέοντα μάλιστα εἶπεῖν). Such profound reflections on peace and the place of oaths, delivered to the Athenian public then or later lucubrated by the historian, highlight Hellenic semi-awareness and anxiety afflicting the artful fragility and actual ephemerality of covenants solemnly sworn for thirty or one hundred years, or for ever.

Hippolytus' notorious semi-abjuration (Eur. *Hipp.* 612: ἡ γλῶσσ' ὁμώμοχ', ἡ δὲ φρὴν ἀνώμοτος) alerts us to the dicey situation of oath at the end of the fifth century. It still (as already in the *Iliad* and Herodotus) constituted a contested instrument of social and political cohesion. The frequently sworn and frequently shattered oaths that punctuated the beginning, middle, and end of the Peloponnesian War invited historical reflection. Lysander (cf. n. 43) continued this downward-spiralling dialogue on oaths, and perhaps he had the last cynical word here, as elsewhere.

In their *dos-à-dos* historiographic methods, these two perceptive historians suggest that recorded Hellenic and barbarian oaths are by nature precarious—indeed potentially lethal—social instruments manipulated in creative, not always ethical, ways. Reliance on Hellenic ideological assumptions may cause one's downfall.

Oath reports and oath behaviours, then, reconstruct sixth- and fifth-century mentalities of eminent Hellenic figures and illustrate the interpretive mentalities found in the texts of these two historians. Both historians' choice of stories and details illuminate the oath business. In summary, both historians show oaths solemnly sworn

⁶⁹ Thuc. 4.19.2, a difficult sentence, in part reads: κατ' ἀνάγκην ὅρκοις ἐγκαταλαμβάνων μὴ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔσου ξύμβη.

and broken. The Athenians, as time passes, make and break many more; the Spartans take oaths more seriously but have an art for cheating on them with self-satisfaction. Broken oaths in Herodotus meet retribution; this is not so for deceptions in Thucydides.⁷⁰ The difference may depend, however, on the different kinds of wars they record: the former, a conflict sustained for ethnic liberation against an alien culture; the latter, a bipolar, self-destructive rivalry for rank and hegemony fuelled by imperial greed. Shakespeare's Hamlet ambiguously declares of Claudius' oaths (*Hamlet* 1.4.14) as we might of these historians' examples, that they offer 'a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance'.

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⁷⁰ His traditionalist Spartans and Nicias express certain remorseful perceptions that Thucydides never endorses (e.g. 7.18, 77).

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Thermopylae and Pylos, with Reference to the Homeric Background*

Edith Foster

For strife among people who are related and understand each others' thoughts is as much worse than war, as war is worse than peace. (Hdt. 8.3.1)

And the Spartans, who were being shot at from both sides, were now in the same situation, to compare small things to great ones, as [those] at Thermopylae, for these were also destroyed when the Persians came around on the path . . . (Thuc. 4.36.3)

Herodotus invented a prose description of battles that differed fundamentally from the poetic battle descriptions of Homer's *Iliad*. His battle narratives depict group rather than individual action, often display the plan of a battle, and offer frequent explanations of decisions and events. They contain essential descriptions of geography, topography, and natural conditions, and depict the political, social, and military strengths and weaknesses of combatants. All of these factors were suggested in Homeric battle narrative,¹ which, however, heavily emphasized the stories and duels of individual warriors, and structured combat narrative by means of the traditional patterns available to the poet; these were ably analysed by Fenik and Latacz.²

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¹ Cf. Strasburger (1971), esp. 1079–88.

² Cf. Fenik (1968), and Latacz (1977).

Thucydides followed Herodotus' every innovation in regard to battle narrative. Despite the evident differences between the historians, the description offered above pertains to his battle narratives as much as to Herodotus', so that we can argue with confidence that Herodotus created the basis for Thucydides' more demanding narratives. This chapter will analyse Herodotus' Thermopylae narrative and Thucydides' Pylos narrative, and will display the close relation between the two historians. In addition, Homeric influences will be taken into account, as far as possible.

These influences appear at the structural level: the Thermopylae and Pylos stories share a physical irony with the *Iliad*. In each of these narratives a vastly more numerous party is unexpectedly thwarted by a much smaller group of fighters that the larger group expected easily to defeat.³ In Thucydides' Pylos account, this irony is carried even further than in Herodotus' depiction of the single battle at Thermopylae, since in Thucydides' story the Spartans begin as the much more numerous party that confidently attacks the Athenians' improvised fort at Pylos. They plan to overwhelm the Athenians with superior numbers from both land and sea (4.8.4 and 4.11.2). However, the Spartans switch situations with the Athenians after their men are trapped on the island of Sphacteria: now the Athenians are far more numerous, and when the few Spartans on the island stall their attack, the Athenians turn to the solution the Persians had used at Thermopylae: they surround the Spartans from front and back, and overwhelm them with numbers.

Thus, the David-against-Goliath proportions of both Homer's and Herodotus' stories furnish a pattern for Thucydides' two-part Pylos narrative, which ends with direct reference to Thermopylae. Further connections are not difficult to find. Since both historians take a starting point from complex descriptions of the wilderness

³ Agamemnon vividly bemoans this situation (*Il.* 2.119–33). Having illustrated that there is less than one Trojan defender per ten Achaean invaders, he concludes: 'This will be a base thing for men of the future to learn, that in vain such a great army of the Achaeans made war and battled without issue against fewer men, and no end appeared. . .'. The disproportion fuels a variety of themes in the *Iliad*, contributing to the characterization of Agamemnon (who blames his troubles on the Trojans' allies), or the depiction of the gods' plans (countless Achaeans can die in Apollo's initial plague and for Zeus's plan to devastate the Greeks for the sake of Achilles' honour, yet multitudes remain alive to fight the Trojans).

topography and human culture that characterize their respective battle sites, it will be convenient to begin with these.⁴

In Herodotus the Greek plan was to fortify the Thermopylae pass, because it was both much narrower and also closer to the Greek cities (7.175.1) than the pass at Tempe in Thessaly, which the allies had abandoned in fear of being surrounded by forces coming from two sides (cf. 7.173.4). The irony of this decision is evident to Herodotus' reader, who knows what will happen at Thermopylae, but Herodotus assures us that when they made their plan the Greeks were ignorant of the path around the Thermopylae pass, and hoped to stop the Persians there (7.175.2 and 177.1). Herodotus' initial explanation of the crucial ignorance of the planners justifies their decision to head to a position all readers know is doomed, and establishes the reader in a position of superior knowledge from the outset of the narrative.⁵

The next paragraphs of description show why the position at Thermopylae was so attractive to the Greeks, mapping out how land and sea both narrow at this point and offer a strong defensive position against invaders approaching from the north. In particular, the topography of the coast safeguarded the shoreline pass at Thermopylae on all four sides, the track along the shore being only one ox-cart wide both in front of and behind the beachhead pass, which was bounded by impassable mountains to the west, and the sea to the east (7.176.3).⁶ Herodotus' detailed descriptions of this wilderness landscape inform the reader of its ancient cultural

⁴ Since discussions of the historians' errors and supposed errors concerning the topography of Thermopylae and Pylos abound (cf. e.g. Wilson (1979), on Pylos and Cherf (2001), on Thermopylae), it is perhaps necessary to state from the outset that this paper deals with the topography in the two narratives as we have them, asking how the topographical information works in the narratives, and does not assess the historians' accuracy about the sites themselves.

⁵ On the use of 'anticipatory suspense' to create a narrative of events 'whose sequence and outcome are known in advance' (293) in Homer, Herodotus, and Thucydides, cf. Rengakos (2006).

⁶ Herodotus produces three main passages of natural description (7.175–7, 7.198–200, and 7.216). In these, the mountains that confine the area are pathless, rocky, high, and extensive: *ἄβατόν τε καὶ ἀπόκρημνον, ὕψηλόν, ἀνατείνον ἐς τὴν Οἴτην*: (7.176.3, cf. 198.1, 199, 216). Further language directed to confirming our understanding of the defensive advantages of the place is also pervasive: cf. forms of *στεινός* at 7.175.1, 176.1, 176.2 (bis), 198.1, 200.1 (with repetition of the fact that *στεινός* means only one ox-cart wide, cf. 176.2), and in scenes of fighting at 7.211.2, 223.2 (bis), and 225.2. Cf. Rood (2009), 167–8 on *στεινός* words at Salamis and Syracuse, as well as at Thermopylae and Pylos, and Thucydides at 3.92.6.

significance;⁷ not only the hot springs, called ‘the Cauldrons’ by locals, but an altar to Heracles, and the ruins of a wall, which in olden times had been fitted with gates (the *Pylae*), mark the pass.⁸

The ruined wall is the remaining sign of the local Phocians’ strenuous past attempts to block off Thessalian attacks from the north. Thermopylae was a natural choke point any invader proceeding south along the shore must pass, and although the Phocians ‘contrived in every way’ (7.176.4) to stop the Thessalians, even loosing the hot water from the springs across the track to erode it away, they failed (7.215), as will the present defenders, who ‘looked ahead at everything and calculated (ἅπαντα γὰρ προσκεψάμενοι καὶ ἐπιλογισθέντες) that [at Thermopylae] the barbarians would be able to use neither their numbers nor their cavalry’ (7.177). Since their calculation is founded on incomplete knowledge of the topography, they will once again (ἀὖτις 176.5) build up the wall, and repeating the Phocians’ fate, will fail to stop invaders who use the path behind the pass. On the other hand, their ignorance will lead them to do the right thing. Heracles’ death in this region (*sc.* the altar) is sealed by the death of his descendant Leonidas and his men, so that the defence of the wild boundaries of Greece through the sacrifices of civilizing powers is confirmed.⁹

The Thermopylae narrative stands at the beginning of Greek contact with Xerxes’ invasion force; by contrast, the Athenians and Spartans have been fighting for six unproductive years when Thucydides’ Pylos narrative begins. No sense of a divine plan fulfilled perfumes this narrative; if history is repeating itself, the lessons are grim. In Thucydides’ Pylos narrative the premier cities of Greece fight over barren rocks on the seashore and in the sea for an

⁷ Cf. Romm (2006), 184, and on wall imagery specifically, Baragwanath (2008), 144–7.

⁸ Subsequently, the narrative follows Xerxes’ vast army past cities and sacred landmarks, e.g. the river Dryas, said to have been helpful to Heracles (7.198.2) and the seat of the ancient Amphictyonic league, with its temples to Demeter and Amphictyon (7.200.2). The combination of wilderness features and ancient religious landmarks is complemented by Herodotus’ extensive story of the wind gods who also inhabit this area (7.178, 188–93). On the relation between the winds, the bad omens, and the natural landscape that characterize Herodotus’ report of Xerxes’ journey southward, cf. Bichler (2000), 333–7.

⁹ For the βωμός, cf. Page, *Poetae Melici Graeci*, 531 (= Simonides’ Thermopylae Ode) with Dillery (1996), 245–8 (cf. also Soph. *Phil.* 723–9). On Leonidas’ Heraclid fate, cf. 7.204, and the Pythia at 7.220.4. On Heracles’ contradictory character and civilizing role, cf. Papadopoulou (2005), 1–8 and 24, with Galinsky (1972).

advantage in a war for power, and one would think that Thucydides could take little from Herodotus' story of Heraclid destiny in his explanation of the events.

However, and despite the fact that important differences are always visible, partly enforced by the course of events, partly by the differing characters of the historians, the opposite is true. Like the Thermopylae narrative, the Pylos narrative begins with the explanation of a wilderness landscape that offers natural protection, and therefore an opportunity for an advantage in this or any war.¹⁰ Demosthenes' plan to use the advantages of the site at Pylos is represented through a record of his futile arguments to his fellow citizens. They are uninterested in his descriptions; however, Demosthenes' perceptions are confirmed by Thucydides' explanations, by Spartan focalization of the same area, and by subsequent events, so that, in this narrative, the reader learns to trust them.

Besides observing the good supply of wood and stone for building, Demosthenes focalizes Pylos as 'defensible by nature' (*φύσει καρτερόν* 4.3.2), and notes that the place is far enough from Sparta to be difficult for the Spartans to protect (4.3.2). Thucydides fills in the political background: Pylos was about 400 *stades* from Sparta, in land once Messenian; the Spartans called it Koryphasion.¹¹ He will not use the Spartan name for this place, preferring the old Homeric name Pylos; in fact the form of his explanation ('Pylos is 400 *stades* from Sparta and in land that once was Messenian, and the Spartans call it Koryphasion . . .') implies that Pylos *is* the name of the place, but that the Spartans have their reasons for using a different name.¹²

¹⁰ It must be noted that both historians frequently begin battle narratives with descriptions of relevant topographical details, and moreover, that the landscape descriptions of Thucydides' Pylos narrative continue themes already present in Thucydides' descriptions of the wilderness settings of Demosthenes' campaigns in Amphiloikia (3.96–8) and Aetolia (3.105–13); the ubiquity of such descriptions should by no means discourage us from interrogating their role in the plot of each narrative.

¹¹ On the name *κορυφάσιον*, Pape and Benseler (1863–70), 702 hypothesize the straightforward meaning 'foothill', as relevant to the foothills of Messenia. There were several places called Pylos on the west coast of Greece, and Thucydides may also have mentioned the Spartan name in case this would help readers better identify which Pylos was at issue.

¹² On the relation of the names Pylos and Thermopylae, and Thucydides' possible preference for the name Pylos for that reason, cf. Stadter, Ch. 3 in this volume, and Hdt. 7.201.1.

These reasons are not far from the surface of the narrative. Unable to convince his fellow generals, who see at Pylos only wild nature and the expense of investing a random promontory of the Peloponnesus for a dubious pay-off, Demosthenes argues further that Pylos is particularly attractive because of the nearness of a harbour, and because the Messenians, anciently at home here, would be reliable guards and (since they spoke the same dialect) effective at harassing the Spartans (4.3.3).¹³ Just as the Greeks who planned the expedition to Thermopylae, therefore, Demosthenes has chosen a site previous parties failed to defend. However, Herodotus' Greek defenders did not realize their error. By contrast, Demosthenes is fully conscious of the Messenians' defeat, and hopes to use the hatreds arising from the conquest of the Messenians against his enemy. It is not surprising that the Spartans, who must be at least equally aware of these hatreds, had avoided the inspiration to ancient dignity offered by the Homeric name of an area the Messenians considered part of their old homeland (cf. 4.41.2).

Thucydides emphasizes that the area is presently uninhabited wilderness (*ἐρημος* nine times: 4.3.2, 3.3, 8.7, 9.1, 13.3, 26.4, 27.1, 29.3, 33.2), and frequently describes Pylos and the island of Sphacteria as pathless, wooded, and difficult (3.2–3, 8.6, 9.2, 10.3, 11.4, 12.2, 27.2, 29.3–4). This is similar to Herodotus' setting for the Thermopylae narrative; moreover, just as in Herodotus, the human history of the harsh landscape will determine the outcome of the battle, since in each historian's narrative the guide who finally leads the attacking party around behind the Spartans is motivated by passions that arise from the ancient and so far permanent conflicts the historians recall to our minds during their initial topographical descriptions. The Thessalian Ephialtes in Herodotus and the Messenian captain in Thucydides are native to the rocky landscapes the historians describe, and therefore belong to peoples who have been fighting over these landscapes for generations. In each historian's account, not engagement with the present war, but the passions established in previous wars (hatred of Sparta in the case of the Messenian, ambition finally to succeed in the case of the Thessalian)

¹³ Demosthenes has much previous experience of this; cf. esp. 3.112.4. Thucydides' presentation of the laconic speech of the Messenian captain at 4.36.1 tends to confirm Demosthenes' observation.

motivate the guide to offer himself and his useful knowledge of the local landscape to the attacking party.¹⁴

Thus, the beginning and climax of each historian's narrative situate the present battle in the larger context of contests that are already many generations old, and which have produced passions that are as if grown from the rocks.¹⁵ The preparatory sections of these narratives are also connected in other ways: for instance, each features fortification. At Thermopylae the Greeks rebuild the wall left behind by the Phocians (7.208.2, cf. 7.176.5), and in the famous case at Pylos, the Athenians finally adopt Demosthenes' plan of occupation and construct the fort because of their boredom at being restrained on shore by the bad weather (4.4.1).¹⁶ After six days the work at Pylos is finished, and the Athenian navy leaves, allowing Demosthenes five ships as guards for his project (4.5.2).

In both narratives, the much more numerous enemy perceives from afar that the occupiers have arrived, and is contemptuous of their presence (Hdt. 7.208.1, Thuc. 4.5.1). Xerxes' ill-founded confidence in his superiority to his Greek adversaries is such that he makes no battle plan, but in the end attacks because of personal annoyance with the fact that the Greeks are blocking his way (7.210.1).

By contrast, in the case of Thucydides' Spartans, confidence is accompanied by a comprehensive plan of reconquest, in the service of which the Spartans mobilize their entire infantry, their Peloponnesian allies, and a navy of sixty ships (4.8.1–2). Thucydides' description of the Spartans' plan is moreover followed by a detailed description of Demosthenes' plan of response to the Spartan attack; unlike the Persians and Spartans at Thermopylae,

¹⁴ Ephialtes, though, also wants a material reward (Hdt. 7.213.1). On the conflict between Herodotus' attacking Thessalians and defending Phocians as 'an analogue of the greater opposition between Greeks and barbarians', cf. Konstan (1987), 71.

¹⁵ For the idea, cf. *Il.* 16.30–5.

¹⁶ Both Thermopylae and Pylos take place on stormy coasts and winds are as important for the Pylos story as for the Thermopylae story. Thus, although Demosthenes' colleagues refuse to stop at Pylos, a storm forces them to put in anyway (4.3.1); winds prevent the Athenians from docking on the sea side of Sphacteria (4.23.2 and 26.6), so that in stormy weather the Helots are able to supply the Spartan prisoners; and winds catch the small fire that burns down the woods on Sphacteria (4.30.2).

the Athenians and Spartans at Pylos will engage in an intense contest of calculation.¹⁷

Thucydides' Spartans' initial plan was to attack the Athenian fort on the Pylos promontory by land and sea; they expected easily to capture this quickly built fort and its few defenders (4.8.4). However, they were also expecting the Athenian navy to come to Demosthenes' aid, and therefore planned to close up the entrances to the harbour protected by the island of Sphacteria (8.5). To explain why this idea had occurred to them, Thucydides describes the topography of the island, which stretched along the coast, offering vivid computations to illustrate his view that the entrances into the harbour might have been blocked off (8.6).¹⁸ The Spartans planned to do this, to place men on the island, and to station men around the shore of the harbour, so that the Athenians could use neither island nor shore as a base and would have nowhere to anchor their ships if they entered the harbour (8.7–8); the seashore outside of the harbour, Thucydides explains, was without any anchorage (8.7). Thus, Thucydides reiterates, the Spartans expected to flush out the poorly supplied Athenians in the fort at Pylos 'without a sea battle and risk' (8.8).

This narrator-focalized account of the Spartans' comprehensive plan provokes the reader's admiration, but as he finishes his account Thucydides relates that the Spartans then brought men over to the island, choosing them by lot, including the 420 who were eventually captured there (8.9). He follows this reminder that the Spartans will lose the battle, despite their thoughtful plan and much greater resources, with an account of Demosthenes' responding preparations.

Thucydides thus stages the contest of intelligence between the two sides before he describes the battle, and Demosthenes possesses the type of intelligence with which the Spartans have had trouble before now: he is a quick improviser, who understands that humble contrivances can get the job done.¹⁹ His mud and stone fort on the

¹⁷ Cf. Stahl (2003), 139–49 on calculation, chance, and thwarted expectations in the Pylos narrative.

¹⁸ Rubincam (2001) offers a description and defence of Thucydides' much maligned presentation. Cf. esp. 85.

¹⁹ At Pylos the Spartans are repeating the siege of Plataea, another place they had expected easily to take (2.75.1), but at which the greatly outnumbered Plataeans had captured them for a siege of several years by undermining their massive efforts with

promontory had been only the first of his inventions at Pylos; since his original expectation that he would not be attacked from the sea side had proven incorrect (4.9.3), he now improvises a protection for the ships left to him by the Athenians, and arms his men with cheap weapons taken from a Messenian pirate ship.²⁰ He leaves most of his people up at the fort, and taking sixty men down to the shore, the master planner tells them that thinking and planning are no use in battle (4.10.3).²¹ Appealing to his troops not to fear Peloponnesian numbers (4.10.2, 4.10.3), he argues that the Spartans will be forced to land a few ships at a time (4.10.4).

This turns out to be correct: the Athenians with Demosthenes are now in a position similarly advantageous to that held by the Spartans at Thermopylae, and although the Spartans contest fiercely for the shore, no amount of bravery and energy can push the Athenians back. Thucydides allows himself a Homeric depiction of the Spartan attack, using the heroism of the Spartan commander Brasidas to represent Spartan bravery in much the same way as the battles of individual heroes represent the larger field of combat in Homer, even giving Brasidas a *parainesis* that follows the Homeric formula (11.4);²² at the same time the opposing Athenians fulfil the central

improvised responses (2.75–8, 3.20–2). Further connections between Thucydides' Plataea story and Herodotus' Thermopylae narrative exist, moreover, since in his Thermopylae story Herodotus mentions the very Theban attack on Plataea that Thucydides describes in detail (Hdt. 7.233.2; Thuc. 2.2–7), relating that the attack on Plataea was captained by the son of that Leontiades who had led the traitorous Theban contingent at Thermopylae. Moreover, like the Spartans who died at Thermopylae, the approximately 300 Thebans who died at Plataea were sent ahead of their main army, which came too late to save them (Thuc. 2.5.1). However, the Thebans' attempt to take ownership of Plataea (finally, cf. Hdt. 6.108) is the opposite of the defence of Greece at Thermopylae, being an unprovoked attack in peacetime (2.2.3). Cf. Stadter, Ch. 3 in this volume.

²⁰ 4.9.1–2. Demosthenes' established relations with Messenians not subordinate to Sparta is important for his ability to prevail not just in the end, but also during the conflict.

²¹ Note the irony with the narrative context, which has been a presentation of the intense planning of both sides. Cf. however, e.g., Archidamus at 2.11.5 on the separation of planning and action in warfare. Demosthenes' advice is actually quite conventional.

²² On Brasidas as Achilles in Thucydides, cf. Hornblower (2004), 47–8. μένειν is thematized, as Hornblower (1996) ad loc. points out. Demosthenes asks the Athenians to stand at 4.10.2, 4.10.3 (where the difficult landscape is their ally if they stand (ὁ μερόντων μὲν ἡμῶν ξύμμαχον γίγνεται), but their enemy's ally if they retreat), and 4.10.5. Fulfilling this command, the Athenians stand and do not retreat

mandate of group fighting in the *Iliad*, namely to stand, and not to yield. In the culminating scene (12.1), Brasidas is heavily wounded trying to make his way to shore on a ramp drawn from his ship; he faints and drops his shield, which, Thucydides tells us, the Athenians later use in their trophy of victory.²³ His reference to this detail is an example of how this passage is focused on the pathos of Spartan bravery and defeat; by contrast to the depiction of Brasidas' heroism, Athenian success at holding the shore is stated (4.10.5), but not described. However, Thucydides' main authorial comment about the battle—that the Athenians were defending Laconian territory from the land, while the Spartans were attacking their own, now hostile, land from the sea, so that each side was using the opposite side's military forte to accomplish an apparently illogical end—points not to the bravery of either side, but to the reversal of roles the battle has enforced upon the combatants.

And now the Spartans make a mistake, so that their plan fails: after a day and a half of attempting to land, the Spartans follow an old habit (cf. e.g. 2.18.1, 2.76.4) and decide to try siege machines: the unexpected failure of their initial attack, their new plan to try the weakness of the fort with machines, or their continued confidence that they can relatively easily win (4.13.1), may have distracted them from closing the mouths of the harbour as they had intended (4.13.4; for their original emphatically repeated intention to do so, cf. 4.8.5, 4.8.7). But the Athenian navy has arrived, and on the next day, recognizing that they have caught the Spartans unprepared, they swoop in through the unguarded entrances and destroy the Spartan fleet, with the effect of trapping the 420 men on the island. The

(τῶν Ἀθηναίων μερόντων καὶ οὐδὲν ὑποχωρούντων) 4.12.3. On μένειν as the tactical goal of massed battle in Homer, cf. Latacz (1977), 195. On typical Homeric *parainesis* patterns, cf. Fenik (1968), 48. The three most common elements of the pattern are the address to friends, indignant questions (or insults, as here), and a call to action; Brasidas starts with the insults, moves to the address to friends, and then calls for action.

²³ This scene seems to me more dramatic than epic, but Homeric paradigms for lowering or dropping armour certainly exist, e.g. at 15.713–15. The Thucydidean hapax λιποψυχεῖν is not easy to connect with Herodotus (who also uses the verb once (7.229.1) of Aristodemus, where it seems to indicate faintheartedness, hardly characteristic of Brasidas here); the other reasonably contemporaneous appearance (a single word, listed as Sophocles Fragment 496 in Pearson and Jebb 1917) is too isolated to interpret.

narration describes the Athenian destruction of each part of the Spartan fleet (14.1) and then the Spartans' desperate, but determined response (14.2), and closes with another explicit remark on the fact that the two sides had exchanged roles, since the Spartans had waded into the water to try to save their ships, and were therefore fighting a sea battle from land, whereas the Athenians, who were prosecuting their advantage to the fullest, were waging an infantry battle from ships (4.14.3).

This disaster leads to the Athenian siege of the island and ultimately to the battle in which about 11,000 Athenian troops storm the island and overwhelm the 420 Spartans captured there. As was mentioned, Thucydides' Pylos narrative does Thermopylae twice: while so far the Spartans have been the attacking many and the Athenians the defending few, the successful attack of the Athenian navy reverses the situation, so that in the second half of the narrative the Athenians play the part of the Persians, and the Spartans on the island play the role of their ancestors at Thermopylae. Together with this reversal, Thucydides' reiterated statements that the military roles each side played in the battles were *also reversed* operate to show that in the end the contest at Pylos compelled both parties to play all roles: the many and the few, the Persians and the Spartans, the sea power and the land power.

Before describing the conclusion of Thucydides' Pylos narrative, it will be useful to examine Herodotus' paradigms for these roles and this narrative a bit more closely. Herodotus' description of the fighting at Thermopylae is divided into two parts. The first section (7.210–13) depicts the first three days of fighting, and stops when Xerxes is forced to give up, because although he has repeatedly sent his best forces against the Spartans, he cannot drive them out of the pass. The second section of battle narrative (7.222–5) begins when Xerxes' forces again attack the Spartans, understanding, as do the Spartans, that Hydarnes' forces will soon arrive at the Spartans' backs from the path around the pass.²⁴ This final day of fighting is divided

²⁴ Herodotus delays his report of the events of the final day by inserting supporting explanations between his account of the first three days of fighting and the final day. Of note are the story of the Phocians' failure, once again, to prevent an invasion of Greece by way of the path behind the Thermopylae pass (7.217.2–218.3), and Herodotus' flashback to the oracle that foretold at the beginning of the war that either Sparta or a Spartan king must be destroyed (7.220); the announcement of

into three parts; first, Herodotus describes the Spartans' sortie in front of their wall, a desperate and demonstrative solo effort against the Persians. Then he describes the dead from this struggle, a Homeric passage in which he announces the deaths of Leonidas and Xerxes' brothers, as well as the battle over Leonidas' corpse. In the final section, Herodotus shows that the Spartans withdraw behind the wall they had defended, and fight to the last as the Persian forces overwhelm them.

Herodotus' story begins with a (renewed) contrast between Xerxes and the Spartans: chapters 208 and 209 show Xerxes' spy's incomprehension of the Spartans he sees exercising and combing their hair in front of the Phocian wall, and Xerxes' incomprehension of both the spy's report and Demaratus' subsequent speech; these anecdotes focus the narrative on the Spartans and on Xerxes, whose inability to understand foreshadows his army's inability to prevail in the battle. At the same time, Demaratus' speeches lend the Spartans a strong moral profile, so that their determination to resist Xerxes acquires the explicit character of a battle to preserve Spartan and Greek freedom.²⁵

As has already been mentioned, Xerxes does not believe he is in any danger from the Greek occupiers of the pass at Thermopylae, and has no battle plan. After speaking to Demaratus he waits for four days, always expecting that the Greeks will flee, but on the fifth day he loses his temper at what seems to him their foolish stubbornness (7.210.1), and sends out the Medes and the Cissians, not to clear the pass (the Persians' military aim, as becomes clear at 2.211.3), but to bring the Greeks to him, alive. A depiction of the warfare of the many follows: 'When the Medes fell rushing upon the Greeks *many fell, but others took their place, they did not retreat, although they were suffering heavy losses*' (ὥς δ' ἐσέπεσον φερόμενοι ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας οἱ Μῆδοι, ἔπιπτον πολλοί, ἄλλοι δ' ἐπесήσαν, καὶ οὐκ ἀπηλαύνοντο, καίπερ μέγαςως προσπταίνοντες, 7.210.2). These short clauses are Herodotus' entire depiction of the first day's fighting at Thermopylae: the Medes attack in a rush; the result, presented directly and with no mitigating transition, exactly confounds the

this previously hidden information trespasses on the reader's sense of superior knowledge. Also of note is the Homeric resonance of Leonidas' decision to stay at Thermopylae for the sake of κλέος; cf. Fenik (1968), 30; Pelling (2006), 92–6 on the self-consciousness of Leonidas' decision; Baragwanath (2008), 64–5.

²⁵ Cf. Lateiner (1989), 155, and Scardino (2007), 195–207.

expectation of easy victory that undergirded Xerxes' self-centred command: many Medes fell.²⁶ The focus of the sentence is the human cost of the attack on the Spartans, although Herodotus also displays Median bravery when he records that despite their losses, the Medes would not cease their attack. Immediately after this, Herodotus writes that their dismal performance 'made it clear to everyone' and 'especially to the king himself', that they were 'many people, but few men' (7.210.2). This assessment merits a short remark: Herodotus shows that the Medes are brave, so that by his own standards these words seem to be a slur;²⁷ but he does not lack sympathy with Xerxes' conscripts, as our examination of subsequent passages will show. I suggest that the visual or physical reference of this statement should not be ignored. Perhaps Herodotus here reflects the grim truth that the many of Xerxes' mass army were normally indistinguishable *anthropoi*.

On the next day the Persian Immortals take over from the Medes; Xerxes is confident that these troops will easily finish off the Spartans (7.211.1). This expectation seems justified: these men are Persians, and trained, and there are 10,000 of them opposing the 4,000 Greeks.²⁸ However, they fare 'no better . . . but rather [experience] the same things' as the Medes. Herodotus explains why the Persians can make no headway: the narrow pass protects the Spartans against the Persians, who cannot use their numbers and also have shorter spears (7.211.3). But the Spartans (on whom Herodotus focuses his account) also contrast to the Persians in skill ('the Spartans showed that they knew how to make war among those who do not [know how to make war]' 7.211.3). To demonstrate this point, he provides one example of a paradigmatic manoeuvre. He reports that at some points of the battle the Spartans would turn their backs and pretend to flee. When the Persians saw them fleeing they would attack the Spartans 'with a clatter and a shout' (another rushing charge such as the Medes had used); to finish the manoeuvre the Spartans would wheel about in formation and slaughter 'numberless' adversaries. The Spartan manoeuvre, as Herodotus describes it, is a

²⁶ Note the ironic triple use of *πίπτειν* and its sounds: the [Medes] fell upon the Greeks, but many [Medes] fell, who were not driven back, although greatly failing.

²⁷ Cf. e.g. How and Wells, ad loc. or Burns (1984), 412: 'unfair and unworthy sneer'.

²⁸ Cf. Xerxes' prediction that the Greeks could not prevail against even an equal number of Persians at 7.103.4, and Dillery (1996), 239.

charade in which the Spartans pretend to do what Xerxes had all along expected them to do (run away), and the Persians are repeatedly drawn in by their ignorance of the Spartans' tactics and discipline; in a single vignette it illustrates the Spartans' psychological advantage (knowledge, instead of ignorance, of the enemy), as well as their advantage in training.

The Spartans themselves lose a few men this way, but decisively dominate their enemy. By contrast, the Persians are unable to succeed no matter how they organize themselves (cf. 9.62.3). They withdraw, but not until Xerxes, observing from his throne, has been thoroughly frightened by what he sees (7.212.1). The full irony of the situation becomes apparent; Xerxes' mighty army, the numbers of which he had admired at length before they fought (e.g. 7.44) is stalled by a tiny number of Greeks; the implication for the war is that if the main Greek armies should arrive he might throw his forces upon the Spartans forever with little effect.²⁹ But Herodotus says no such thing, and only continues to demonstrate the disproportionate failure of his army. Xerxes' fear is as useless to this army as his pique was earlier, and on the third day the barbarians compete no better than on the previous ones (7.212.1). Now Persian hopes are based on the expectation that the Greeks will be wounded and no longer able to 'raise their hands against them', but the Greeks keep order, take turns, and continue to fight, so that the Persians again withdraw, and Xerxes is reduced to *aporia* (7.213.1).

This economical narrative has so far shown that the Persian forces could not prevail because their training and weapons are inferior; in addition their Spartan adversaries are better organized and protected by the narrow pass. Xerxes, who believes he is the centre of Persian strength, is a liability, and is ultimately reduced to helplessness. Leonidas has been entirely absent from the initial battle description; sentence-length explanations of each successive day have been the building blocks of a vivid story.

On the final day of fighting, Leonidas has sent away the Greek allies, and only the Spartans and Thespians remain, with their Theban hostages (7.222).³⁰ The Persian forces under Hydarnes have spent the night rounding the path behind the pass. Although he

²⁹ Cf. *Iliad* 17.746–53, where the two Aeantes, holding off the Trojan army, are compared to a ridge unaffected by flood waters.

³⁰ On Herodotus' relative neglect of the Thespians, see esp. Vanicelli (2007).

makes his libations at dawn, Xerxes waits until later in the morning to attack (7.223.1), since he has a much shorter and easier way to go than those coming around behind on the path. Once Xerxes attacks, the Spartans also attack, and 'since they were making a sortie to death, they attacked further forward by far into the broader parts of the pass than in the beginning' (7.223.1).

This famous last stand has been the subject of much romanticizing (cf. e.g. Diodorus Siculus 11.10–11). But not in Herodotus, who repeats almost exactly the same language he had used at 210.2 to show the immediate consequences for the Persian many of making contact with the Spartans: 'but at that time, since they met their enemy outside of the narrows, many from the number of the barbarians fell (ἐπιπτον πλήθει πολλοὶ τῶν βαρβάρων)'. Once again, only battle contact and the deadly consequences are stated, without any intervening transition or depiction of the fighting itself: in creating this battle narrative, Herodotus passed over Homer's main field of description.

Or perhaps we should rather argue that he has transformed it to inform a more political understanding of the combatants. When Herodotus recorded in chapter 210 that many Medes fell in the initial attack on the Spartans, he followed this statement with a blunt assessment of Xerxes' army (they were many people, but few men), and offered no further description of their fate. During the narration of the final battle, the pathetic deaths of Xerxes' numberless conscripts receive direct attention, and expose horrific aspects of slavery to a tyrant.

Herodotus' account shows that the conscripts are trapped between two causes of death, namely, their Persian overlords and the Spartans. He characterizes the Persian ἡγεμόνες with a (familiar) object of tyranny (ἔχοντες μάστιγας cf. e.g. 7.35 and 7.56). Vivid verbs (ἐρράπιζον, διεφθείροντο, κατεπατέοντο), absolute adjectives/adverbs (πάντα ἄνδρα, αἰεὶ), and a single circumstantial adjective (ζωοί) show the inescapable fate of the conscript army. The passage also displays a prose structure familiar from both historians, in which a number of observations are capped by a short and decisive narratorial judgement: '... and many from the number of the Persians fell. For (γάρ) the leaders of the companies, having whips, were flogging every man, always driving them forward. And many of these fell into the sea and died, but yet more were trampled down alive by one another. There was no account of the destruction of men' (7.223.3).

The Spartans are the second cause of death, 'for (γάρ), since they understood that death was their future, they showed the greatest possible aggression (ρώμης) towards the barbarians, and reckless desperation' (παραχρεώμενοι τε καὶ ἀτέοντες). In the concluding sentence, references to Spartan weapons and a single vivid verb depict the Spartans' slow demise, but simultaneous destructiveness: Herodotus tells us that their spears (δόρατα) were by now mostly broken, so that they were slaughtering (διεργάζοντο) their Persian victims with swords (τοῖσι ξίφεσι 224.1).

Herodotus' politically charged descriptions of the final Spartan action aim to create hostility to the Persian leadership, sympathy for their doomed conscripts, and admiration for Spartan heroism. However, they culminate in ceremonial and Homeric praises of the leaders on both sides. Interrupting the narration of events, he announces that both famous Spartans and famous Persians fell (224.1 and 2). Among the Spartans, Leonidas and other notable men die, fighting most bravely (γενόμενος ἄριστος; ἀνδρῶν ἀξίων γενομένων 7.224.1, cf. 7.226–8); the historian states that he learned the names of all 300.³¹ As for the Persians, Herodotus transfers to them the biography typical of doomed Homeric warriors.³² The pathetic story of Habrocomes and Hyperanthes, brothers of Xerxes, sons of Darius and Phratagune, shows that their deaths wipe out a branch of the Persian royal line. The passage is deliberate Homeric imitation, but also establishes Herodotean *tisis* for the death of a Spartan king.

Let us finish the narrative. The arrival of Ephialtes' forces is announced. Although defeat is now inevitable, the Spartans are able to rescue Leonidas' corpse four times 'through bravery' (ἀρετῇ 7.225.1, discussed below). Herodotus follows the Spartan withdrawal to its famous *telos*, namely the hill where Leonidas' stone lion stands (7.225.2). The Persians pour over the wall and in from behind; the descriptive verbs draw them as a force of nature (κατέχωσαν, συγγχώσαντες cf. e.g. *Il.* 12.470) that finally entirely surrounds the

³¹ Thus the language of praise is Homeric; cf. Loraux (1977), 105–9. However, Herodotus' memorialization of his own memorialization of the Spartans displays important differences between the historian and the Homeric narrator, who relies on the muses. Cf. de Jong (2004), 103–5 on Herodotus as an 'overt' narrator.

³² Herodotus here places material Homer uses to introduce those who will lose a duel in the post-mortem position. On Homer's use of such biographies in battle narratives cf. Fenik (1968), 17.

Spartans, who are now nearly denuded of weapons, and are fighting with knives, if they have them, or their hands and teeth (note the heavy stacking of concepts and sounds in the last three words *περιελθόντες πάντοθεν περισταδόν*).

This, then, is the Thermopylae narrative to which Thucydides' doubled Pylos narrative refers, and which Thucydides and his readers evidently knew well. In order to speak more exactly about its influence on Thucydides, a more detailed analysis of Homeric influence will be useful.

As we have seen, Herodotus is far from Homer's vivid depictions of death in battle.³³ A genius stroke of Herodotus' narrative is to lead the reader right to the point of Spartan annihilation, but leave Spartan deaths to the imagination. The most vivid deaths of this narrative are experienced by people who cannot fight, and are trampled, drowned, or slaughtered indiscriminately. In another contrast to Homer, the emotions of the leaders, who make no speeches, are described only as they are relevant to the causes of the battle or the political themes of the narrative; Leonidas' emotions during the battle are therefore not described at all. By contrast, the historian himself is overtly present, not hidden like the Homeric narrator. Corresponding to this, places and times are accurately depicted, and Herodotus can sometimes refer to the reader's knowledge of them. Weapons are not heroized or mythological, but become part of the explanation (e.g. Persian spears were shorter), although finally they play a part in the pathos of the battle, as the Spartans are shown gradually to wear out their panoply. The economy of the narrative is persistent, with few actions getting more than a sentence of description or explanation. The pace is correspondingly regular, by contrast to the Homeric tendency to vary the pace of narration.

Instead, Herodotus offers us a narrative structured around his analysis of the events. For instance, 7.223–5 contain five sentence-length explanations, all beginning with *γάρ*. Xerxes attacks later in the morning, and this is explained (223.1). The Greeks attack further out from their wall, and this is explained (223.2). Many Persians fall, and the causes are described (223.3); this pattern is repeated in the next sentence (223.4–224.1) in which Persian deaths are explained by reference to Spartan determination. Chapter 224 interrupts the relation of events to praise the combatants. The relation of events

³³ Cf. Boedeker (2003).

resumes (225.2) when Ephialtes arrives. Herodotus reports that the Greeks changed tactics, and explains the change (fifth γάρ sentence), describing the Spartans' retreat to the hilltop. The final sentence of the narrative, in which the Persians pour in from both sides, is still analytical, since it is divided into μέν/δέ sections so that the role of each party of Persians can be visualized. It can be said without much exaggeration that the main actions of this narrative are accompanied by explanations: a signal Herodotean innovation.³⁴ The density of explanation reflects a determination that analysis should predominate even, or perhaps especially, in emotionally resonant narratives.

Herodotus thus claims new authority for himself and explanatory power for his narrative; the relation to Homer is nevertheless very strong. Comparing this narrative to the *Iliad*, both influence and imitation are visible. As an example of influence, Herodotus' two main verbs of action: μένειν and πίπτειν, are solidly Homeric.³⁵ As previously noted, the main aim of group warfare in the *Iliad* is to stand in solidarity (μένειν, e.g. *Il.* 5.498, 13.129 and 151, 15.312, cf. also ἔσταν at e.g. 5.497 or 6.106); group and individual death are often designated with the metaphor πίπτειν (e.g. *Il.* 11.85, 13.178 and 181, 15.319).³⁶ The word ἀρετῇ, used to describe the bravery of the Spartans as a group at 7.225.1, is also Homeric, cf. e.g. *Il.* 11.90. Herodotus deploys even much rarer Homeric vocabulary: περιστάδόν (7.225.3), the last word of Herodotus' description of the fighting at Thermopylae, is a *hapax legomenon* in Homer, Herodotus, and Thucydides (cf. *Il.* 13.551, and *Thuc.* 7.81.4, where the Syracusans surround Demosthenes and the defeated Athenians in Sicily).³⁷

Direct imitation of Homer is also easily visible. For example, Herodotus' descriptions of the noisy, rushing Persian onslaughts (especially at 7.211.3), and of Greek order (7.212.3), renew Homer's characterizations of Trojans and Greeks (cf. *Il.* 3.1–9, and 4.427–38), intensifying the sense that the Persians are the real losers in this battle. The formulaic records of the deaths of Leonidas and of Xerxes' brothers add grandeur and the emotional resonance of age-old ceremony to the battle narrative; as for the battle over Leonidas' body, Lawrence Tritle suggests in a recent essay that not Herodotus,

³⁴ For a supporting linguistic analysis of 2.229, cf. Lateiner (2002).

³⁵ μένειν: 7.210.1, 213.2, 219.2, 220.2, 222 (bis). πίπτειν: 7.210.2, 211.3, 223.3 (bis), 224.1, 224.2 (bis), 228.1.

³⁶ Cf. Latacz (1977), 193–8.

³⁷ Cf. Smith (1900), 74.

but the Spartans themselves may have been responding to Homeric paradigms, so that Herodotus was in this passage not so much imitating Homer as recording an example of Homer's influence on Greek values and behaviour.³⁸

It would be possible to list many more examples of Homeric influence on Herodotus; our task here is to analyse Herodotus' prose description of Thermopylae, and to distinguish Herodotus' influence on Thucydides from Homer's influence on Thucydides. Taking Homer by himself, briefly, group fighting is far less prominent than individual combat in the *Iliad*, and Latacz argues that it displays recurring characteristics. Homer's massed battle scenes show close body contact between the two sides, give prominent attention to weapons for fighting hand to hand, and describe the physical destruction caused by these weapons; they also emphasize the solidarity of the men on each side. In addition, what Latacz calls 'atmospheric' elements of description: the noise of battle, the glare, the dust, and so on, and also similes, are prominent and frequent. Similes relate to either the crash of the two battle lines as they meet, or to long undecided fighting.³⁹

These observations seem unimpeachable.⁴⁰ In terms of our study here, a few remarks might be added: in the *Iliad*, men not only stand in solidarity, as Latacz observed, but are eager to fight and to create warfare (e.g. 13.135, 13.337–8, 15.696–9); the devastating weapons with which they hope to slaughter the other side are densely and frequently depicted, even personified (e.g. 13.130–5 with 16.212–18, 13.337–43, 15.313–17, 15.711–15); as in individual combat, the damage these weapons cause, the cutting of men, the blood flowing, and death, is emphasized (e.g. 15.713–15), together with the toil (πόνος e.g. 13.344, cf. Hdt. e.g. 7.224.1, Thuc. 4.14.4) of battle, and the harsh conditions of the battlefield: the endless confusion in the midst of mortal danger, the choking dust and simultaneous blinding glare (e.g. 13.336–44). Furthermore, scenes of group fighting in Homer frequently begin with exhortations (e.g. 16.200 ff. or

³⁸ Cf. Tritle (2006), 216; for the view that Herodotus' account of the struggle for Leonidas' body responds to the battle over Patroclus' corpse in the *Iliad*, cf. Pelling (2006), 92–3.

³⁹ Cf. Latacz (1977), 188–9.

⁴⁰ However, they answer to the priorities of Latacz's analysis, which asked what information Homer could provide about real massed battles in early Greece.

17.220 ff.).⁴¹ In the *Iliad*, massed charges usually come about because a leader is responding to an opportunity or emergency; while human beings do make plans and arrangements (e.g. Ajax's plan finally to rescue Patroclus' body at 17.715–21), the most important battle plans abide with the gods. On the whole, the passions of warfare and the suffering of warfare are central, an aspect of the Homeric tradition to which Thucydides will confidently, but selectively, return.

One final Herodotean passage should be mentioned before returning to Thucydides. Herodotus records that the Spartans considered Dieneces the best man at Thermopylae, after Leonidas, not because of any recorded military deed, but because of his *bon mots* (7.226.2). That the Spartans would consider someone to be best among them because of his maxims throws a happy light on their supposedly taciturn national character; even happier is the example Herodotus provides, since Dieneces' good word ('if the Medes will hide the sun [sc. with their arrows], they are doing us a favour, since we will fight in the shade' 7.226.2) reveals, besides intelligent wit, the calm temperament that was a famous result of the Spartan system of education.⁴²

It will be necessary to arrive at the end of Thucydides' vastly more complex narrative in order to analyse his response to this passage at 4.40.2.⁴³ Thucydides' Pylos narrative stretches over a much longer period (seventy-two days as opposed to the Herodotean four), and records the reversals of role and fortune we have already discussed, as well as a period of negotiation and siege between the two main phases of fighting. Other significant differences from Herodotus' narrative are easily visible: Thucydides' narrative emphasizes complex battle plans; in addition, he reintroduces into his narrative two Homeric usages Herodotus excluded, namely descriptions of the psychological progress of the two armies, and closely bound together

⁴¹ By contrast, Herodotus' four main battles of the Persian Wars (Marathon, Thermopylae, Salamis, and Plataea) contain no exhortations on the Greek side at all (although Miltiades' speech to Callimachus at 6.109.3–6, and Pausanias' prayer to Hera at 9.61.3 might be seen as occupying the structural position of an exhortation).

⁴² Dieneces' statement seals the impression of calm created by Herodotus' account of the observations of Xerxes' spy (7.208–9), and also responds to Xerxes' fascination with his own numbers, since it reduces numbers of enemies to another condition of battle.

⁴³ For further remarks on the relation of the Pylos narrative to the larger themes and plan of Thucydides' *History* see Rutherford, Ch. 2 (on 7.71.7), Baragwanath, Ch. 12 (on 4.36.4), and Stadter, Ch. 3 in this volume.

with this, descriptions of the battlefield experience. In Thucydides, the constant swirling crisis of the Homeric battlefield reappears in prose narrative, here as an insistent presentation of the human and environmental challenges faced by the Spartans. Nevertheless, Herodotus is omnipresent. Thucydides' Pylos narrative not only responds to the plot of the Thermopylae story, but also often displays the Herodotean structure of action and explanation we have just described.

Demosthenes is the central figure of Thucydides' narrative;⁴⁴ he has endured the whole siege of Sphacteria, and during this time has tried to imagine how to attack the 'heavily wooded and pathless' (4.29.3) island. Now, Cleon is about to arrive with reinforcements, and the soldiers are urgent to get things over with (4.26.4; 4.29.2); moreover, the woods on the island have burned down. Before the fire it was clear to Demosthenes that an attack could not succeed, and Thucydides shows why in a representation of Demosthenes' imagination of the two possible phases of battle.

Demosthenes first imagines a large army disembarking against enemies whose errors and preparations would be disguised by the woods; he projects that 'all their own errors' would be easily visible, and that their enemies could attack unexpectedly whenever they wished (4.29.3). Second, he imagines what would happen if they should be able to force themselves into 'dense country', and foresees enemy advantages here as well, projecting that the 'experienced few' would be stronger than 'the inexperienced many', who would have no way of perceiving harm to their own side (29.4). Demosthenes was all too experienced, as Thucydides remarks, at failing to prevail in wooded landscapes (30.1). He perceives that the woods would make any force strong: the enemy of Demosthenes' imagination is anonymous, and would not need to be Spartan in order to win. However, his actual plan, which Thucydides reveals only as the battle

⁴⁴ His centrality reflects his leading role in Thucydides' previous accounts of Demosthenes' Aetolian and Amphiloichian campaigns, and his future prominence in the Sicilian narrative. Cf. Roisman (1993). The Pylos narrative continues Thucydides' exploration of Demosthenes' character and effect on historical events, and also develops themes of the previous and subsequent narratives, so that in the Pylos narrative readers encounter a web of intertextual and intratextual references. Intertextual relations are necessarily the focus here; the intratextual relations are at least as important for understanding the Pylos narrative. On the Aetolian and Amphiloichian campaigns, with particular regard to the relation of these narratives to Thucydides' account of events at Pylos, cf. Stahl (2003), 129–53.

unfolds, responds both to the new circumstances on the island and to the Spartan character. Thucydides' presentation of Demosthenes' strategic reasoning is a new element of battle narrative, the brainy historian's own innovation.⁴⁵

Given Demosthenes' close consideration of natural circumstances, it should not surprise us that his plan uses darkness and subterfuge to confuse and surprise the Spartans from the very beginning. Starting at night, and loading all 800 of his hoplites into a few ships so that the Spartans would mistake them for the regularly sailing vessels of the Athenian blockade (cf. 32.1), Demosthenes disembarks his hoplites on both sides of the island, and they advance towards the Spartans' beachfront guard station at a run (31.1). Although he has just begun his narrative of events, Thucydides interrupts the story, inserting an explanation (*γάρ*) of the location and strength of the three Spartan camps on Sphacteria (31.2).⁴⁶ The ordering of this explanation exactly prefigures the order of the battle: first the Athenians will kill everyone in the guard camp on shore, then they will fight the massed body of Spartans, who live on the flattest, central part of the island, and finally they will fight at the ancient fort on the cliff opposite Pylos, where the Spartans will defend themselves until they surrender.

Once Thucydides has furnished his reader with a mental map, he takes up the story where the Athenians ran off. They destroy the guarding Spartans, killing them in their beds or as they are arming.⁴⁷ By this time it is dawn, and Demosthenes lands his huge force of light-armed Athenians and Messenians (32.2). He divides them up into groups of about 200 and tells them to occupy the high ground. Thucydides' report of Demosthenes' aim for this troop disposition slips into the optative tenses, conditional sentences, and anonymous roles that had characterized his account of Demosthenes' imagined battle. However, this battle will really take place; moreover, the passage concludes with an unusual change of tenses. Demosthenes projects that his light-armed troops will overwhelm the Spartans:

⁴⁵ The presentation of strategic thought is certainly not limited to the Pylos narrative, but is common in Thucydides; for Demosthenes, cf. 7.42.3–5.

⁴⁶ The device also creates suspense, since Thucydides sets his Athenians running and interrupts the narrative before we can find out what happened.

⁴⁷ *διαφθείρω* in this narrative: 4.32.1, 36.3, 37.1, 38.5, and 40.2; cf. Hdt. 7.213.1 (Ephialtes destroyed the Greeks at the pass). The scene recalls the *doloneia* of *Iliad* 10, and bears close linguistic and thematic relation to 3.112.3.

if [the Spartans] attacked those in front of them, they would be shot at by those behind them; if [they attacked] those on their flanks, by those stationed on the other side. And [the Athenians] would always be behind them in whatever direction they advanced; their enemies would be the weakest light-armed troops, whose war strength (*ἀλκὴ*) was mostly in arrows and javelins and stones and slings, and whom it was impossible to attack. *For by fleeing they were winning, and by retreating, attacking.* With this intention Demosthenes first imagined and also in fact realized the disposition [of his troops]. (4.32.3–33.1)

The sudden use of the iterative imperfect at the moment when Thucydides' description of Demosthenes' thoughts is complete, particularly following the vivid polysyndeton of the preceding clauses, seems to mark the moment at which Demosthenes' perception of the specific situation changes to a perception of a general strategic law. The battle account will bear out his view of the power of the Athenians' guerrilla forces, who win by fleeing, and attack by retreating, thus repeating the tactics the light-armed Aetolians had previously used to defeat the Athenians themselves (cf. 3.97–8, esp. 3.97.3). Just as the Spartans and Athenians had earlier in the Pylos narrative reversed roles, in the battle on Sphacteria behaviours normally associated with defeat—fleeing and retreating—actually characterize the victors.

The presentation (although not the prominence) of Demosthenes' unstated plans and thoughts in Thucydides' narrative of the events at Pylos is not without Herodotean precedent.⁴⁸ However, a more important response to Herodotus in this narrative is Thucydides' decision alternately to explain and to describe group battles. A brief look at the next chapter of the Pylos narrative shows that the Herodotean model for analytical battle narrative is a common paradigm for Thucydides.

In 4.33.1 the main body of Spartans on Sphacteria forms up for a hoplite battle, and this is explained (*γάρ* sentence) as a result of the stationing of the Athenian hoplites across from them. In 4.33.2 Thucydides tells us that the Spartans were unable to fight the hoplite battle they expected to fight, and this is explained (*γάρ*) through a description of Athenian tactics: the light-armed troops attacked from

⁴⁸ Cf. esp. the plan at 9.51.1–4 to move to 'the island', which the Greeks imagine clearly and at length, but never realize. Herodotus' (mostly) character-focalized account shows not what the Greeks did, but what they might have done, and in this resembles Demosthenes' imagination of mistakes he did not make.

the sides, but the Athenian hoplites remained stationary. The successful attacks of the light-armed troops are then described: the Spartans easily drive them off, they retreat, and then return, the heavy-armed Spartans being unable to follow them over the rough terrain. Soon the Spartans begin to tire (34.1).

The action-explanation pattern we saw in 4.31.1–2, and find again in 4.33.1 and 4.33.2, seems to indicate that Thucydides sometimes worked directly within the frame of the swift-paced Herodotean pattern.⁴⁹ However, the narration also diverges from this Herodotean model, in the sense that the explanation is devoted to the changing psychological attitudes of the two sides, and the battlefield conditions that cause these changes.⁵⁰ The light-armed troops now see that they are effective, and take confidence from the sight of their own numbers. They had been ‘enslaved’, Thucydides explains, to fear of the Spartans, but now that they have not suffered the destruction they expected, they become contemptuous and find the courage openly to attack the Spartans: ‘and shouting, the crowds attacked them and were casting stones and arrows and javelins, whatever each one had to hand’ (34.1).⁵¹

Thucydides devotes two detailed sentences to depicting battlefield conditions and the Spartans’ consequent psychological state. The Spartans are shocked from the shouting and running attack, the ash from the burnt woods keeps them from seeing the arrows and stones (4.34.2), their coverings⁵² are inadequate to protect them from the spears that are breaking off and sticking in their armour; they are unable to hide from the direct view of others, when at the same time they cannot hear commands because of the noise (34.3). As a result of their *ponoi*, the Spartans are reduced to helplessness (34.3), and forced to retreat (4.35.1); by contrast, the light-armed become

⁴⁹ In Herodotus see further examples at 9.61.3 and 62.2, and perhaps esp. at 63.2. In Thucydides, the long explanations of Mantinea 5.66.3–67.2, 5.71.1–2 are, for instance, not introduced with *γάρ*, but cf. e.g. 3.98.1, 3.112.3–4, 5.70, or 5.72.3 for examples closer to the Herodotean pattern.

⁵⁰ Descriptions of rising and falling morale on the battlefield, depending on events, are a regular feature of battle narratives in all three of our authors; cf. Thuc. 7.71 for a focused and explicit presentation.

⁵¹ The polysyndeton here mirrors the presentation of Demosthenes’ thoughts at 4.32.4. For polysyndeton and arms in Homer cf. *Il.* 13.130–5 or 15.710–12, with Tyrtæus e.g. 8.30–4.

⁵² *πίλοι* (Thucydides’ word for the relevant part of Spartan armour) have not been firmly identified. Cf. Hornblower (1996), ad loc. and Gomme (1962), ad loc.

entirely confident, shouting even louder and attacking even more fiercely, killing whatever enemies they can reach during the Spartan withdrawal to their final position at the ancient fort (4.35.2). These descriptions recover Homeric themes for prose narration by activating them for the explanations Herodotus had made into a central feature of battle description, although Homeric techniques are never employed to the extent of abandoning historiographical reticence: the vivid deaths of Homeric writing are excluded from both historians.⁵³

Once at the ancient fort, where the Athenians cannot encircle the Spartans, both sides suffer the miseries of fighting thirsty in the sun (4.35.4) until the Messenian captain offers his solution. Thucydides describes how he and his men pick their way around the bottom of the cliff and suddenly appear on high ground behind the Spartans, striking them once more into *ἐκπληγῆς*.⁵⁴ Here is a misery unknown at Thermopylae, where the Spartans well knew that the Persians were coming from both sides. Thucydides' statement that the Spartans were now in the same circumstances as their ancestors at Thermopylae (4.36.3, quoted at the head of the chapter) pertains to being attacked from both front and back, not to the Spartans' psychological condition.⁵⁵ In Herodotus' story, once the Spartans at Thermopylae know they are doomed, they attack and inflict damage on the Persians to the last, whereas Thucydides' Spartans at Pylos, traumatized by this last surprise, and having fought all day against effective, rather than ineffective, enemies, 'fighting as few against many, and in the weakness of their bodies through lack of food, retreated, and accordingly the Athenians gained control of both entrances' (4.36.3).

The situation at Pylos is fundamentally different from that at Thermopylae. Herodotus' Xerxes had no plan, and sacrificed numberless men in futile direct attacks on an entrenched enemy. At Pylos, the Athenian hoplites never attack, and the Athenians suffer hardly any casualties (cf. 4.38.5). Demosthenes' plan was calculated

⁵³ Descriptions of gruesome death were certainly not unknown to Herodotus, even in battle, cf. his description of the death of Masistius (9.22.2), for instance. But both historians entirely avoid Homer's persistent, climactic depictions of death in battle.

⁵⁴ *ἐκπληγῆς* (a frequent Homeric usage) in Thucydides' Pylos narrative: 14.3, 34.2, 36.3; contrast Dienes at Hdt. 7.226.2. On *ἐκπληγῆς* in Thucydides cf. Lateiner (1975).

⁵⁵ Cf. Hornblower (1996), 33–4.

to harass the Spartans into weakness, and in the rough and trackless environment of the island the huge army of light-armed troops proved superior to the heavy-armed Spartans. Even so, ruses were required at the beginning and the end of the battle.

Thucydides displays the misery of defeat and the accusations of cowardice that followed the Spartans' surrender to the Athenians in several stories. Especially noteworthy is his blow-by-blow description of the refusal of the Spartan commanders on the mainland to give the order to surrender, which unloads this responsibility onto the third in command on the island (4.37.3). Thus, the Spartan defeat is compounded by a failure of leadership. Once captive at Athens, the Spartans are mocked by Athenian allies (not even Athenians), to whose query as to whether those who died at Pylos were *καλοὶ καγαθοί*, an anonymous Spartan replies that 'a spindle, meaning [Thucydides tells us] an arrow, would be a most useful article if it could distinguish brave men', showing, Thucydides tells us, 'that whoever happened to meet arrows and stones was destroyed' (4.40.2).⁵⁶ The Spartan implies that the Athenians won through cowardly attacks at a distance. This is not true. As Thucydides has shown, Demosthenes won through a well-thought-out plan. However, arrows were a central Athenian weapon, and to these hoplite virtue makes no difference.⁵⁷ The Spartan's observation confirms that the virtues demonstrated at Thermopylae could not win this battle, and throws into question the relevance of assessing it according to the standards of the Persian Wars. Contrast Herodotus' story of Dieneces: whereas Dieneces, confident of his virtue, could ignore arrows (and death), Thucydides' anonymous Spartan must bitterly observe that arrows can ignore the brave.

The demonstration of the difference between the two wars might be one reason why Thucydides chose to create such a close relation between his own narrative and Herodotus' Thermopylae narrative. This chapter has touched on some elements of that relation, and has attempted to provide some evidence that in general Thucydides learned much from Herodotus' organization and presentation of

⁵⁶ Note Thucydides' close control of the reader's interpretation of his anonymous Spartans' words. On the use of the term *όμοιοι* earlier in this passage, cf. Loraux (1977), 107.

⁵⁷ Connor (1988), 28–9, with his discussion of Euripides' *Heracles* on the use of arrows in warfare.

battle narratives. Finally, it also touched on Homer's example and the historians' differing relation to Homer.

Near the conclusion of the Pylos story Thucydides remarks that the Spartan surrender at Pylos was for the Greeks the most unexpected event of the Peloponnesian War, since they thought that 'the Spartans would not think it right to surrender their weapons because of hunger or any necessity, but would die, keeping them and fighting to the limit of their capacity' (4.40.1). This presentation of Greek public opinion shows that in Thucydides' view the Greeks had established Spartan behaviour at Thermopylae as a standard for how the Spartans ought to have behaved at Pylos (and ought to behave everywhere else).⁵⁸ We have some licence to suspect that his narrative is partly organized to defend the Spartans from the imputation that they surrendered because of cowardice (cf. 4.40.2). He takes their side throughout, depicting their determination, tenacity, and bravery in each situation. Whatever other mistakes they made, in Thucydides' Pylos account the Spartans demonstrated the character for which they were famous. The surrender of the 292 survivors of the battle over Sphacteria was a moral defeat, and added substantially to Spartan misery and uncertainty until the battle of Mantinea (cf. esp. 5.75.3). Such humiliations were the price of involvement in the lengthy (or perhaps one should say permanent) contest for power between Greek cities, peoples who knew each other's minds. With his comparison to Thermopylae, Thucydides aims to instruct readers who, unlike Herodotus, might not recognize how much more miserable his war was than the preceding one.⁵⁹

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⁵⁸ For a reflection of the pressure the reputation of Thermopylae exerted on the Spartans in the Peloponnesian War, cf. 1.69.5.

⁵⁹ For Herodotus' view, see the quotation at the head of this chapter. The argument made here contrasts to Schwinge (2008), 84–5.

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Thucydides on Themistocles: A Herodotean Narrator?*

Wolfgang Blösel

For more than a century Thucydides' eulogy on Themistocles has been interpreted as a classic revision of Herodotus, who allegedly defamed the victor of Salamis.¹ The aim of this article is to show that Thucydides, since he was covering other periods of Themistocles' life than Herodotus, simply did not have the opportunity decisively to refute his predecessor's portrait. For an understanding of Thucydides' treatment of Themistocles, it is necessary to discover his sources and to assess how much he has taken from them. Only then will we be able to compare Thucydides' description of Themistocles with the description Herodotus formed, often enough by twisting his sources' biases around. Since I have already demonstrated Herodotus' methods of portraying Themistocles in an article and a monograph, in the following I shall restrict myself, where appropriate, to references to the arguments made there.²

* Professor Victor Parker (University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand) took on the laborious task of correcting my English, for which I thank him heartily.

¹ Cf. Meyer (1899), 224f.; Gomme (1945), 26f.; Westlake (1955), 61; Patterson (1993); Tsakmakis (1995), 119, 143f., 231. *Contra* Hart (1982), 151f.

² Blösel (2001) and (2004).

I. FIRST THUCYDIDEAN REFERENCES TO THEMISTOCLES

As long as Thucydides is treating the Persian Wars, his implicit references to the Herodotean report are obvious—for instance, in the short notice (1.14.3) on the Athenian fleet, for the instigation of which the historian gives Themistocles alone the credit. But according to Thucydides, Themistocles was able to adduce not only the Aeginetans—as in Herodotus (7.144.3)—but also the Persians as potential targets of the new triremes. The Athenians' praise of Themistocles as 'the cleverest general' in the battle of Salamis (Thuc. 1.74.3) presupposes the Herodotean description (8.46–93). Likewise, the statement that the Spartans honoured Themistocles 'like no other stranger' is based on Herodotus (8.123).

Moreover, one cannot wholly comprehend the Athenians' assessment of the Persian Wars in their oration at Sparta in 432 BC (Thuc. 1.74) without having first read their reproaches against the Spartans for not having taken another defensive position in Boeotia after the fall of Thermopylae (Hdt. 8.40.2). The hypothetical subjunctive clause concerning the inevitable subjugation of all Greece to the Persian king, if the Athenians had given up their resistance, is also borrowed from Herodotus (7.139.2–4).³

Thucydides' summary of the Persian Wars becomes much more detailed precisely when he is about to report the event with which Herodotus' work ends, namely the siege of Sestus, the last Persian fort in Europe, by the Athenians and their allies.⁴

II. THE STORIES OF THE REBUILDING OF THE CITY WALLS OF ATHENS AND THE FORTIFICATION OF THE PIRAEUS (Thuc. 1.89.3–93)

Immediately thereafter Thucydides tells the curious story of the building of Athens' city walls (1.89.3–93.1) as the first part of his explanation of how Athens attained hegemony during the Pentecontaetia.

³ Cf. Hornblower (1992), 146 = (1996), 128; esp. (1992), 150 = (1996), 133: 'in speeches (...) he was content to take his facts on trust from Herodotus, or to let his "audience" do so, to an exceptional extent'. For the Athenians' speech, cf. Tzifopoulos (1995) and Rood (1999).

⁴ Thuc. 1.89.2; Hdt. 9.121; cf. Canfora (1971), 661 f.

This anecdote presents Themistocles as a cunning leader who deceives the Spartans, who had protested against the building of the wall, by himself going to Sparta and inducing the Spartans to send ambassadors to Athens in order to inspect the work. Once the ambassadors arrived, the Athenians were to hold them as hostages until Themistocles could return after the construction of the walls had been completed.

The Herodotean character of this story is striking⁵ since it gives an aetiology for present circumstances and explicates the protagonists' motives in a distinctly un-Thucydidean manner. Besides, the anecdote concentrates both on Themistocles, who uses—as several times in Herodotus—a secret message to tell the Athenians to hold the Spartan envoys as hostages, and on city walls, which are important for Herodotus.⁶ Here we also find many other elements that probably allude to Herodotus:

1. The Peloponnesian allies instigate the Spartans' protest against the Athenians' building of the wall (Thuc. 1.90.1); this harks back to the enmity of the Corinthians and Aeginetans against Athens (Hdt. 8.5; 61.1; 92).
2. The Spartans' offer to the Athenians to retreat completely to the Peloponnese (Thuc. 1.90.2) repeats their willingness in the winter of 480/79 to take in the Athenian women and slaves (Hdt. 8.142.3 f.).
3. Themistocles is here employing the same tactic of delay which the Spartans normally used in Herodotus; strikingly they did so in order to play for time against the Athenians while completing the wall across the Isthmus of Corinth.⁷
4. Themistocles takes advantage of the Spartans' known mistrust of other Greeks and their insistence on having a close look with their own eyes at foreign things.⁸
5. Finally, Themistocles' stress, in his culminating speech to the Spartans, on the superior insight of the Athenians even

⁵ Cf. Hart (1982), 176.

⁶ Cf. e.g. Hdt. 6.36.2; 9.13.2; Lawrence (1979), 113 f.; Baragwanath (2008), 144–7.

⁷ Cf. Hdt. 9.8.1. Cf. D. M. Lewis in an unpublished article cited by Hornblower (1991), 136.

⁸ Cf. Thuc. 1.91.2 and Hdt. 8.81; besides Thuc. 1.68.1 and Tsakmakis (1995), 74 f. n. 37.

when they had lost their home town (Thuc. 1.91.5), may only be understood as an answer to the insult of the Corinthian Adeimantus (Hdt. 8.61.1) that Themistocles, as a homeless Athenian after the evacuation of Attica, could claim neither seat nor vote within the Greek war council at Salamis.

Thus, the anecdotal form, as well as the contents and even plot structure of Thucydides' tale of the building of Athens' wall, allude to numerous Herodotean passages. From this we may conclude that the Thucydidean story has a common origin with some Herodotean anecdotes, which presumably stemmed from Athenian oral tradition.⁹ In view of the stories' closeness Thucydides seems to have taken the plot structure from his source. For, unlike for the events of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides could not question eyewitnesses about events which occurred over two decades before he himself was born.¹⁰ This may account for the story's numerous anachronisms and improbabilities that we shall point out in what follows.

At the beginning of the last century a fierce controversy raged about its historicity. Von Stern and Beloch argued—at least in my opinion convincingly—that this story does not report a historical event of the year 479/8.¹¹ Nevertheless, after Gomme's sharp criticism of Beloch, the story seems to have been accepted as authentic in the last decades.¹² For this reason I feel entitled to summarize the most conclusive arguments against its historicity:

1. In the year 479/8 the relationship between Sparta and Athens was not at all so hierarchical that the Spartans would have been able to demand that the Athenians stop building their city walls. How could Sparta have denied them what most cities of mainland Greece—Sparta excepted—had: fortifications around the polis centre?¹³ As opposed to Thucydides' Spartans, Athens' defences would have been of great advantage to the 'real' Spartans if the

⁹ Cf. Hart (1982), 176; Fornara and Samons (1991), 119, 121.

¹⁰ Cf. Gribble (2006), 442–4.

¹¹ Von Stern (1904) and Beloch (1916), 149–54; similarly Keil (1902), 282–301; De Sanctis (1912), 493 f.; Heuß (1962), 242; Sealey (1976), 240 f.; Fornara and Samons (1991), 118–21; Welwei (1999), 77, 368 f. n. 1 f., 370 n. 23. Meiggs (1972) passes over this story in silence.

¹² Gomme (1945), 267–70; cf. *inter alios* Lotze (1970), 256–60; Podlecki (1975), 30–2, 182 f.; Hornblower (1983), 21 f.; Roobaert (1985), 161–6; Shear (1993), 415–17; Bābler (2001), 3–6; Lindenlauf (2009); Berkey (2010), 61–3; Foster (2010), 97–102.

¹³ Cf. Snodgrass (1986).

Persians ever returned, because an impregnable stronghold there would have relieved their wall across the Isthmus.¹⁴ The Spartans and their Peloponnesian allies would have had much more reason to protest against the fortification of the Piraeus than against the city walls, since this harbour was to be the basis for the Athenian rule of the sea.¹⁵ The Spartan proposal to the Athenians that together they should destroy the walls of all Greek cities outside the Peloponnese is totally unrealistic and consequently incredible.

2. Even more suspicion is aroused by the fact that the Spartans allegedly showed no open annoyance when they finally realized that Themistocles had duped them. On the contrary, the Spartans' goodwill towards the Athenians, as stressed by Thucydides, makes it doubtful that the cities had quarrelled at all. It is significant that Theopompus and Andocides in their versions of the story replaced Themistocles' trick with the Athenians' simple bribing of the Spartan ephors.¹⁶

We find the clue for understanding the story at its end, in its aetiological accounting for the irregular structure of the Athenian city walls, which were built out of gravestones and statues, not yet hewn into shape.¹⁷ Thucydides (1.93.2) takes this strange fabric as proof of great haste during the building. But the allegedly threatening intervention of the Spartans in 479/8 still did not produce enough pressure. Moreover, according to Thucydides, the Athenians widened the ring wall 'in all directions'. Indeed, Athens might have had an archaic city wall of c.2.6 km length surrounding just the Acropolis, the Areopagus, and the agora.¹⁸ But it is barely credible that in 479/8 the Athenians would have spurned the foundation of the archaic wall or that they would have been able to build a totally

¹⁴ The example of Thebes, which the Spartans allegedly adduced to argue against city walls (Thuc. 1.90.2) is wide of the mark because in 479 the Persian general Mardonius preferred a battle and consequently gave up his stronghold at Thebes before the defeat at Plataea (Hdt. 9.2 f.; 15.2; 20; 41).

¹⁵ Cf. Fornara and Samons (1991), 120. After the Athenian defeat in 404, the Spartans demanded only the razing of the Long Walls between the city of Athens and the Piraeus, not of the city walls themselves (Xen. *Hell.* 2.2.20).

¹⁶ Theopompus *FGHist* 115 fr. 85 = Plut. *Them.* 19.1—Andocides 3.38.

¹⁷ Cf. Wycherley (1978), 11–13; photographs of the so-called Themistoclean city wall in Knigge (1988), 52 pl. 51 and 32 pl. 28 f., picturing some spoils.

¹⁸ Cf. Lauter-Bufé and Lauter (1975); Winter (1971), 61–4; Wycherley (1978), 9–11; Weir (1995); but sceptical Snodgrass (1986), 130; Berkey (2010), 80 n. 2. Thuc. himself (1.89.3) mentions such an archaic wall.

new circuit wall of a length of no less than c.6.5 km within a few months.¹⁹

Moreover, the use of spoils for walls by no means needs to be viewed as the consequence of great haste, as the column drums of the so-called archaic pre-Parthenon demonstrate, since these had been integrated into the North Wall of the Acropolis.²⁰ In general, the Athenian city wall was not at all a temporary measure, but quite solidly constructed.²¹ Finally, as regards the time of their production, many spoils found in the so-called Themistoclean city wall appear to fit much better into the two or three decades *after* Xerxes' invasion of 480/79 rather than in the time *before*.²² Therefore, it is not far-fetched to suggest that the Athenian city walls were not completed until the middle of the fifth century.

Proceeding with this assumption, the question then arises: when did the Athenians invent the anecdote about the hurried building of their city walls through Themistocles' ruse? When the Archidamian War had begun in 431, the city walls of Athens gained enormously in importance in comparison with the decades before and consequently were repaired.²³ While doing so the Athenians probably wondered at the numerous spoils within the rampart and explained this circumstance by the putative great hurry of the construction. This was a

¹⁹ Cf. von Stern (1904), 557 f. *contra* Busolt (1905), 270–6. Cf. also Thuc. 5.82.6 for the wall building of the Argives (cf. Hornblower 2006, 623) and Diod. 13.63.3 for the rebuilding of the city wall of Selinus.—The claim of the *praefectus praetorio* Constantinus to have had the Theodosian Wall of Constantinople, which was 5.7 km in length, rebuilt after the earthquake of AD 447 'from scratch round the clock within sixty days' (cf. the inscription in Kalkan and Şahin 1994, 151, lines 6f.) can only refer to a thorough repair.

²⁰ For the spoils of the pre-Parthenon cf. Tschira (1965), 426 f.; Drerup (1981), 31 f.; Vickers (1985), 25. Winter (1971), 77 f. is ambivalent about whether the walls were built in a hurry. *Contra* Gomme (1945), 269: 'The manner of building is a proof of hurry.'—Comparable is the city wall of Mogontiacum built in the middle of the third century AD. It contained many spoils, not only honorary decrees for the Severan emperors and altars, but also inscriptions of the *legio XXII Primigenia Pia Fidelis*, although the unit was to stay in Mogontiacum until the 4th century; cf. Frenz (1986).

²¹ Stressed by Noack (1907), 129; Wycherley (1978), 11–13; Berkey (2010), 63.

²² Examples are inscriptional bases of graves (e.g. IG I³ 763 with a four-bar sigma not customary before the middle of the 5th cent. BC and IG I³ 699, 788, 837, 839) as well as gravestones of Carian, Samian, and Naxian people, cf. Philadelphus (1922), 34; Raubitschek (1949), 462; Willemsen (1963), 104 (ambivalent dating); emphatically Vickers (1985), 25–30 and Steskal (2004); the last also reports on the problem of the so-called 'Perserschutt', with further literature.

²³ Cf. Ar. Eq. 817 f., with schol. and von Stern (1904), 561 f. for the following note as well.

less prosaic explanation than the more evident one, namely the abundance of debris lying around everywhere after the Persians' destruction of Athens in 479. Since the Greek victories at Salamis, Plataea, and Mycale were considered too overwhelming, the Persians were no longer imaginable as the potential threat against which the fortifications had been built so hastily. More obvious candidates for this role were the Spartans, the fiercest opponents of the Athenians for decades.

But why did Themistocles become the protagonist of the story? Aristophanes' *Knights* demonstrates that Themistocles had been rehabilitated in public opinion during the 420s although the Athenians had condemned the victor of Salamis to confiscation of his fortune and perpetual exile for alleged treason in the early 460s.²⁴ After Themistocles had taken refuge with the Persian king, several slanders circulated which defamed him as a traitor even when he led the Greek resistance against the Persians. But by the 420s, such widely disseminated calumnies had to be compensated for by tales glorifying him as a champion at least of Athens. The story of Themistocles' ruse for securing the completion of the Athenian city walls supports this 'rehabilitation programme' by creating an image of an archetypal Athenian patriot. Moreover, this story seems to be a direct response to the suspicion that Themistocles allowed the Spartans to bribe him with extraordinary presents and honours so that he would promote pro-Spartan policy. In fact, Ephorus reports for the year 479/8 that the Athenians deposed Themistocles from the military command for no other reason than that he had accepted the Spartan awards in the autumn of 480.²⁵ Further tales portraying Themistocles as determinedly hostile towards Sparta might belong to the same 'rehabilitation programme'.²⁶

Finally, Thucydides' insertion of the two other Athenian envoys to Sparta into the story can be easily explained: Habronichus was known as the liaison officer between the army led by the Spartan

²⁴ Ar. *Eq.* 814–16, 884–6, 1039f. Cf. Anderson (1989), 14f.; Braun (2000), 193; Montana (2002); Blösel (2004), 354f.—Condemnation: Thuc. 1.135.3; Plut. *Them.* 23.1; Diod. 11.55.4–7; Idomeneus of Lampsacus *FGrHist* 338 fr. 1 = schol. Ar. *Vesp.* 947a.

²⁵ Extraordinary honours in Sparta: Hdt. 8.123; Thuc. 1.74.1.—Ephorus in Diod. 11.27.3.

²⁶ e.g. his successful resistance against the Spartan proposal to remove all medizing states from the Delphic amphictyony (Plut. *Them.* 20.3f.) or his plan to destroy the Spartan fleet wintering near Pagasae (Plut. *Them.* 20.1f.; Arist. 22.2; Cic. *Off.* 3.11.49).

king Leonidas at Thermopylae and the Greek fleet at Cape Artemisium.²⁷ The use of Aristides the Just as the messenger serves to ennoble Themistocles' trick. But one cannot rule out the possibility that Themistocles, Aristides, and Habronichus were indeed known to have been envoys to Sparta in the winter of 479/8. For after the departure of the Spartans', as well as the Peloponnesians', fleet from the siege of Sestus, the Athenians are likely to have tried to motivate the Spartans to resume the fight against the Persians in the Hellespontine area.²⁸ Obviously, such a supposed Athenian legation to Sparta was successful: the Spartans sent out the regent Pausanias with a fleet in 478. Therefore, the largely fictitious Thucydidean story might still contain a small kernel of historical truth.

Why, then, has Thucydides brought the story into his account of the Pentecontaetia? First, it enables him to portray Themistocles not only as insuperable in cunning, but also as an unambiguous champion of the Athenian cause. In the face of the widespread slanders of Themistocles as a traitor, Thucydides desperately needed such a patriotic roguish prank because the later excursus on the flight of Themistocles from Greece to Persia would not offer further opportunities for this kind of story. Therefore, this tale is one of the few narrations in Thucydides that strongly resemble—as regards anecdotal structure and personal sympathy—the Herodotean stories on Themistocles, especially those recounted for the period before the battle of Salamis. Even with Thucydides the question of historical truth takes second place to these narrative aims.²⁹

Besides, the Athenian city walls, which allegedly were hastily and carelessly built, provide the necessary pendant to the much more solid ramparts of the Piraeus, which were constructed—according to Thucydides on the advice of Themistocles—with painstaking care

²⁷ Hdt. 8.21. ²⁸ Cf. von Stern (1904), 562.

²⁹ Tsakmakis (1995), 231 stresses for all stories in the first book of Thucydides that the plot, characters, and motifs have been made so consistent that it is impossible to discern between historical reality and artistic invention. In his view, Thucydides takes it for granted that the reader is able to recognize the dialectic relationship of the episodes to their context and to Herodotus. ('Handlung, Charaktere, Motive, aber auch Sprache und Stil sind so eindeutig auf die beabsichtigte Funktion abgestimmt, daß es unmöglich ist, Grenzen zwischen der historischen Faktizität und der künstlerischen Erfindung zu erkennen. Die beabsichtigte Funktion der Episoden besteht nicht primär in der möglichst objektiven Repräsentation der Faktizität, sondern in der Wirkung auf den Adressaten. Dabei wird vorausgesetzt, daß der Adressat die dialektische Beziehung der Episoden zu ihrem Kontext und zu Herodot erkennen kann.')

and so that they would be particularly thick.³⁰ This contrast in quality was to symbolize Themistocles' frank preference for naval warfare over defence by land. In this important respect he prefigures the strategy of Pericles in the Archidamian War.³¹ By turning the Athenians into sailors, the Thucydidean Themistocles recurs to the Herodotean depiction in which he persuades his fellow citizens to evacuate Attica and to put all their trust in Athens' ships in the summer of 480.³² So Thucydides was able to praise him as the (co-) founder of Athenian maritime power.³³

III. THE EXCURSUS ON THEMISTOCLES

(Thuc. 1.135–8)

Once his Themistocles has had the Piraeus fortified, Thucydides passes in silence over his further fate until the Greeks' hunt for him begins. Thucydides' story begins again with the Spartan claim that they had found proof of Themistocles' Medism while investigating their regent Pausanias. The Athenians were easily persuaded of Themistocles' guilt, especially since he was living at that time in exile at Argos after his ostracism (1.135). Thereafter, he took refuge from his united pursuers first in Corcyra, then by supplicating the Molossian king Admetus, a former adversary, for protection (1.136). From Pydna he went on via Naxos to Ionia by a merchant ship (persuading its owner with a threat of denunciation, as well as by the promise of money). Having arrived at Ephesus, he wrote a letter to the Persian king Artaxerxes. Therein he legitimized his fierce fight against Artaxerxes' father as long as he was invading and destroying Greece. But Themistocles falsely claims that he later hindered the destruction of the pontoon bridges over the Hellespont when Xerxes

³⁰ For the wall of Piraeus cf. Garland (1987), 14–22, 162–5 and Wycherley (1978), 15, 263.

³¹ Thuc. 1.93.5–7. Themistocles' contempt for defence by land is emphasized by his advice to give up the city of Athens in an emergency and to protect only the harbour. He proposes that only the 'most useless people' serve as defenders of the Piraeus walls while all the others should serve in the triremes. His strategic similarity to Pericles is explicated by Plat. *Gorg.* 455d–e.

³² Cf. Hdt. 7.143 f.; 8.61.2; 8.62.2.

³³ For the leitmotif of the 'beginning' of Athenian 'rule' (in Greek both elements expressed by ἀρχή) in Thuc. 1.89–93 cf. recently Moles (2010), 24 f.

allegedly ran the risk of being cut off from the retreat to Asia. Finally, he promises Artaxerxes further services as well as a visit to Susa after a year spent in learning the Persian language and customs (1.137). Once he had arrived, the Persian king honoured him like none other of the Greeks and ceded to him the tax revenues of the cities of Magnesia on the Maeander, Myus, and Lampsacus.³⁴ Finally Themistocles died of an illness in Magnesia, his retirement home, and seems to have been buried there at the marketplace. But his relatives are said to have managed to bury his bones secretly in his native Attic soil, although this was denied to condemned traitors (1.138).

Several dramatic elements in this digression look out of place in Thucydides' otherwise austere report. The urgent form of Themistocles' supplication—grabbing a child of the Molossian king—as well as the rhetorical figures he uses to persuade the ship-owner to bring him to Asia, obviously seem to be parts of well-rounded anecdotes. We find even more such characteristic details in the preceding excursus on Pausanias, which we have to include in our analysis of Thucydides' potential source(s). Pausanias' secret messages to the Persian king (1.128.7), his secret dealings with the helots for preparing a *coup d'état* (1.132.4), the motif of 'Bellerophon's letter' (1.132.5), the last messenger's trick to induce Pausanias to confess his treacherous plans (1.133), his pursuers' sacrilegious means of putting him to death in a temple (1.134.2 f.), the resulting religious curse and the command of Apollo to sacrifice two men as compensation for Pausanias and to bury him where he had died (1.134.4), finally his imperious haughtiness and love for oriental luxury as harbinger of his irresistible fall (1.130)—all these components we would expect with a storyteller like Herodotus, but hardly in Thucydides.³⁵

The general impression that in the two excurses Thucydides has taken complete stories from Ionian narrative tradition has been substantiated by Westlake, who has noted a number of lexical peculiarities in both: *Σπαρτιᾶται* instead of the Thucydidean

³⁴ In spite of Thucydides' contention, this does not imply Themistocles' sovereignty over these cities; cf. Briant (1985), 59 f. and Keaveney (2003), 69–87. For the metaphorical meaning of the wine, bread, and meat which the three cities had to deliver him cf. Marr (1994).

³⁵ Cf. Rhodes (1970), 399 f. and Tsakmakis (1995), 119, 150.

Λακεδαιμόνιοι, the use of *λέγεται* as in Herodotus in order to mark an oral or written source, and finally the overwhelming number of nearly sixty *hapax legomena* which, however, Herodotus and other Ionian authors commonly used.³⁶

In these two excurses Thucydides has quoted verbatim three letters (one by Pausanias to Xerxes, the latter's reply, and one by Themistocles to Artaxerxes) which themselves provide clues about their origin. The correspondence, incidentally, is almost certainly inauthentic, since no one was likely to keep on hand personal copies of such compromising documents for the sake of posterity. But that Thucydides wrote them is likewise improbable, because he would neither have sinned against his own strict principles, on the one hand, nor would he on the other have had such exact knowledge of the Persians' culture and in particular of their bureaucrats' official language. For Pausanias' and Themistocles' letters show the same familiarity with Persian officialese as Xerxes³⁷—and all that even *before* Themistocles began his 'language course' in Ephesus! In particular the official recording of Pausanias' good deed (having secretly sent home some Persian prisoners of war) in Xerxes' letter strongly resembles Themistocles' understanding of the Persian custom of weighing up someone's good deeds against the evil ones³⁸ so that one cannot help thinking that both (and, frankly, all three) letters have the same author.

The sharp contrasts between the depiction of Pausanias' and Themistocles' last years confirm this conclusion.³⁹ The former was about to betray Greece to the Persian king while the latter did his fatherland no harm by falsely claiming to have performed a benefaction for the king and by vaguely promising 'further services' without any real possibility of assisting the king with the subjection of Greece. By imitating the Great King's oriental luxury and his arrogant, imperious way of ruling, the Spartan regent engendered in the Greeks around him nothing so much as profound repugnance.

³⁶ Westlake (1977).

³⁷ Cf. Olmstead (1932/3), who, however, as recently Gauger (2000), 263 f., 374, considers the letters to be authentic, and Schmitt (1983), esp. 71 f., with the linguistic examples.

³⁸ Cf. Hdt. 1.137.1, 7.194.2; Diod. 15.10 f; and Bucci (1972), 167 f. with further examples.

³⁹ Cf. Konishi (1970), 62–5 and Tsakmakis (1995), 146–8. Ellis (1994) demonstrates the ring composition of many parts of the digressions.

(When Herodotus interprets Pausanias' imitation of the Persians' opulence in food as well as in decoration right on the battlefield of Plataea itself as a way of ridiculing their softness in contrast to the Greeks' tough way of life, he shows that there was a fundamental disagreement among historians concerning Pausanias' Medism.⁴⁰) Themistocles on the other hand earned much respect and admiration by adapting so thoroughly to Persian culture. Pausanias did not have Themistocles' foresight and tactical skill at disguising his plans, and the success of both men is exactly opposite to their respective initial position: the successful general Pausanias wanted to marry the Great King's daughter, but instead receives only orders from Xerxes to betray his country as soon as possible. Themistocles, on the contrary, was a powerless refugee, but is honoured by Artaxerxes and endowed with a sumptuous 'pension'—defined in terms of food, no less—which he could enjoy for the remainder of his days, while Pausanias died of starvation. The continual contrastive characterization in both excurses must be seen as the product of one single writer.

Westlake has presumed—nevertheless with considerable reservations—that Charon of Lampsacus might have been Thucydides' source here. Since Hornblower has cast doubt on this assumption, it is necessary briefly to repeat the old arguments for it and to add some new ones as well.⁴¹

Charon, like his younger contemporary Herodotus, not only wrote in Ionic narrative style, but actually mentions Themistocles, who, he says, took refuge with Artaxerxes—in this point he significantly agrees with Thucydides against, with one exception (see below), the rest of the tradition, which far more spectacularly arranged for Themistocles to meet with Xerxes himself.⁴²

Charon either in his 'Annals of Lampsacus' or in his 'Persian affairs', which treats the Persian Wars, had every reason to recount

⁴⁰ Hdt. 9.82. Cf. Parker (2005).

⁴¹ Cf. the arguments in Blösel (2004), 350–2 and Parker (2005), 3 f.—Westlake (1977), 108 f. provided only general and very reserved suppositions. Charon had already been suggested as Thucydides' source by Rhodes (1970), 389 n. 1 and Podlecki (1975), 64. *Contra* Hornblower (1991), 211: 'It is hardly worth trying to give a name to the written source, if there was one' and Patterson (1993), 145 n. 2, 152.

⁴² Cf. Plut. *Them.* 27.1 = Charon *FGrHist* 262 fr. 11. For Charon cf. Fowler (1996), 67 and Blösel (2004), 43 with n. 166 with further literature.

Themistocles' as well as Pausanias' final years. For Charon's homeland, the northern Troad, was the junction of their fate: Themistocles received the revenues of Lampsacus as *apanage*. Its eulogy as 'the most abundant in wine of all cities' (Thuc. 1.138.5) might reflect Charon's local patriotism. Moreover, a Lampsacene proxeny decree from around 200 BC for a descendant of Cleophantus mentions a feast for his father Themistocles, who seems to have rendered the city great services.⁴³ Finally, a fragment of Idomeneus of Lampsacus, who around 300 BC wrote a book entitled 'On the Athenian Demagogues', reports the Athenians' condemnation of Themistocles to perpetual exile and their confiscation of his fortune 'because of his betrayal of Greece'.⁴⁴ Since Idomeneus considers Themistocles to have fled to Artaxerxes (in agreement with Charon and Thucydides) while all other authors mention Xerxes,⁴⁵ he had probably taken the rest of the report on Themistocles' conviction from his fellow townsman Charon as well.

Pausanias, on the other hand, after his expulsion from Byzantium c.478, fled to Colona in the hilly hinterland of Lampsacus, where he ruled for a considerable time.⁴⁶ Besides, Charon is likely to have made inquiries about Pausanias in Sparta when he prepared his list of 'The Prytaneis of the Lacedaemonians'.⁴⁷ Spartan officials as Charon's sources might therefore have been responsible for the pro-Spartan tone of the excursus on Pausanias. It is surely not by chance that the final messenger, who in the end proved Pausanias' treason, came

⁴³ Decree in Frisch (1978), 9–14, no. 3, ll. 12–15. The author of [Them.] *Ep.* 20.39 Cortassa maintains that Themistocles freed Lampsacus from all revenues. This might be conceivable for the historical Themistocles because the city seems to have been a member of the Delian League for a very short period only; cf. Rhodes (1970), 394 f.; Meiggs (1972), 53 f.; Frisch (1978), 11–13, 115.

⁴⁴ Idomeneus of Lampsacus *FGrHist* 338 fr. 1 = schol. Ar. *Vesp.* 947a:

ὁ Ἀθηναίων δῆμος ἀειφυγίαν αὐτοῦ καταγνοῦς ἐδήμευσε τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ ὅτι πρὸς Ἀρταξέρξην ἦκε φεύγων, σαφές ποιεῖ Ἰδομενεὺς διὰ τοῦ β' τὸν τρόπον τούτων· οἱ μέντοι Ἀθηναῖοι αὐτοῦ καὶ γένους ἀειφυγίαν κατέγνωσαν προδιδόντος τὴν Ἑλλάδα καὶ αὐτοῦ ἡ οὐσία ἐδημεύθη. Cooper (1997), 466 f., however, presumes Stesimbrotus of Thasos as Idomeneus' source.

⁴⁵ Plut. *Them.* 27.1 names the writers besides Charon and Thucydides.

⁴⁶ Cf. Thuc. 1.131.1; Iust. 9.1.3; Meiggs (1972), 72 f.; 465–8. Hornblower (1991), 217, however, thinks of the coastal town of Colone situated 8 km south of the later Alexandria Troas.

⁴⁷ For this work *FGrHist* 262 T 1 = Suda s.v. *Χάρων*. Cf. also F 2 = Athenaeus XI p. 475b–c about the cup of Alcmena, which is allegedly shown in Sparta 'in his own day'.

from Argilos, a town inhabited by the Thracian Bisaltae whose odd military stratagem Charon described.⁴⁸

Finally, Charon might well have been able to imitate Persian diplomatic style reasonably well, for the simple reason that he spent most of his lifetime as a subject of the Great King in the Hellespontine region, then a principal target of Persian military and diplomatic activities in Asia Minor.⁴⁹

We conclude that in light of the many Ionic elements and other linguistic peculiarities, there is no reason to be sceptical about the written source for the two excurses in Thucydides. Charon of Lampsacus is by far the most probable candidate for their authorship—unless we prefer to assume a writer totally unknown to us.

IV. WHAT IS THUCYDIDES' IN THUCYDIDES' DIGRESSION ON THEMISTOCLES?

If Thucydides took the bulk of the two excurses verbatim from Charon, what in them is original to him? Prime candidates are the detailed appreciation of Themistocles' intellectual abilities (1.138.3), as well as an insertion in Themistocles' letter to Artaxerxes (1.137.4)—to judge from the high density of expression, which is found in both passages and is so much more characteristic of Thucydides' tortuous Attic than of the storytellers' easy Ionic.

The insertion in Themistocles' letter (1.137.4) implicitly denies his claim to have prevented the Greeks' destruction of the bridges over the Hellespont.⁵⁰ We can, however, surely assume that the author of the purportedly Themistoclean letter, probably Charon, in the passage which Thucydides replaced with his insertion, originally had Themistocles expressly confess his treason in sending a secret message from Salamis. The original declaration warned the defeated king of his risk of being cut off from the retreat, as well as when he

⁴⁸ Thuc. 1.132.5—*FGrHist* 262 fr. 1 = Athenaeus XII p. 520d–f.

⁴⁹ Cf. Mosley (1971), 4.

⁵⁰ Cf. Blösel (2004), 266–8 for the reasoning that the whole insertion at Thuc. 1.137.4 should not be referred to the first secret message to Xerxes before the battle as well, but only to the second one.

stopped the Greeks from demolishing the bridges.⁵¹ This hypothesis is corroborated once again by Idomeneus of Lampsacus. If he indeed, as I hope to have made probable above, took his account of Themistocles' conviction in Athens 'because of treason against Greece' from his countryman Charon, then the latter, too, might have seen Themistocles as guilty of this crime; for there the charge is mentioned without any qualification.⁵²

V. A SURVEY OF THE HERODOTEAN PORTRAIT OF THEMISTOCLES⁵³

In the fifth century, Charon was not alone in his negative judgement. Especially after Themistocles' flight to the Persian king, many in Greece denounced him as a traitor as far back as his *strategia* in 480. The case of Themistocles' second secret message to Xerxes after the battle of Salamis is especially complicated: although later authors interpreted it as a stratagem of Themistocles (and Aristides) in order to speed up the Persian retreat from Greece,⁵⁴ such a military ruse is quite improbable in view of the restricted strategic possibilities of the Greeks even immediately after their triumph at Salamis. It is, however, more conceivable as a duplicate of the first message sent to Xerxes before the sea battle, which falsely claimed that the Greeks would flee from Salamis in the following night. Since both Aeschylus and Herodotus attest it, this first message was indeed historical, and served to induce the Persian admirals to split up their fleet in order to blockade all the exits from the Strait of Salamis, in addition to having their rowers spend the entire night on the benches without sleeping

⁵¹ An indication of how at least the first part of that passage in Charon's letter might originally have read is perhaps given by Corn. Nep. *Them.* 9.3: *Nam cum in Asiam reverti vellet [sc. Xerxes] proelio apud Salamina facto, litteris eum certiore feci id agi, ut pons, quem in Hellesponto fecerat, dissolveretur atque ab hostibus circumiretur: quo nuntio ille periculo est liberatus.* But Corn. Nep. *Them.* 5 classifies this secret message in advance as a Greek military stratagem in order to hasten the Persian retreat from Greece.

⁵² See above n. 44.

⁵³ For an extensive recent interpretation of Herodotus' portrait cf. Baragwanath (2008), 289–322, emphasizing its contradictoriness and gaps as his offer to the reader to conjecture the motives of Themistocles. Cf. my review in *Klio* 94 (2012).

⁵⁴ Ctesias *FGrHist* 688 fr. 13.30; Ephorus in Diod. 11.19.5f.; 11.59.2; Plut. *Them.* 16.4–6.

or eating, so that they were exhausted on the day of the battle.⁵⁵ While all ancient writers counted this first message to Themistocles' credit, the story of the second message to Xerxes seems to have been concocted merely in order to detract from the great glory he had just earned.

Quite remarkable is how Herodotus twists the defamatory story around (8.108–10): by demonstrating that the destruction of the Hellespontine bridges would in fact have had disastrous effects on the Greeks, by making Themistocles send the second message not from Salamis, but rather from Andros, and finally by mentioning no reaction from Xerxes at all, Herodotus effectively acquitted Themistocles of having done his compatriots any harm. The only beneficiary of the message was Themistocles himself, because—as if Herodotus were anticipating the Thucydidean report—on the basis of the pretended service he was able some years later to claim a warm reception in Persia.

Herodotus created one of the finest episodes in his *Histories* when he had his Themistocles prevent the Athenians from pursuing their risky plan of destroying the bridge by presenting to them a highly ambivalent alternative: after having completely driven out the barbarians from Greece, he says, the Athenians should now rather rebuild their own houses and look after a careful sowing (8.109.4). Behind this admonition to moderation, Herodotus has hidden Themistocles' actual programme after his triumph at Salamis: now, after the decisive victory against the invaders has been gained, the Athenian general prefers to take care of his own interests exclusively. Immediately afterwards he puts this programme into action, first, by sending the second message to Xerxes and so 'sowing' what would bring enormous profit years later and, second, by extorting money from the inhabitants of the Cyclades, unbeknownst to the other Greek commanders (8.111 f.). This story probably arose out of a calumny of a betrayal purportedly committed by Themistocles when the still medizing Andrians bribed him to lift the siege of their city, which was of strategic importance for the Athenians.⁵⁶ Especially the motif of extorting money from the islanders allows Herodotus to

⁵⁵ Aesch. *Pers.* 339–405; Hdt. 8.75. For Herodotus' revising of Aeschylus' report cf. Parker (2007). In antiquity, only Frontin. *Strat.* 2.2.14 recognized the second aim of this secret message. For its authenticity cf. Hart (1982), 98.

⁵⁶ Cf. Blösel (2004), 285–320, summarized in (2001), 189–94.

represent Themistocles as the prototype of the post-war Athenians who subjected and exploited other Greeks through the Delian League. But this negative role of Themistocles is only one side of the coin.

For Herodotus praises Themistocles as the champion of Greek freedom in the period before the battle at Salamis, the actual turning point of the Persians' invasion. It was he who persuaded the Athenians to place all their hopes in their navy and to evacuate Attica.⁵⁷ At Cape Artemisium as well, Themistocles held the Greek resistance together when the other commanders were about to leave this crucial position, from which they were obliged to support the defenders of Thermopylae (8.4 f.). Even for this praise Herodotus is once again likely to have twisted the plot of an originally slanderous story of Themistocles as traitor, since he allegedly receives thirty talents from the Euboeans for saving their goods. By distributing the smaller part of this sum to the Spartan and Corinthian commanders,⁵⁸ whilst keeping the bulk, he is able to persuade them to remain in this position. This story of the avaricious Greek commanders might have been based on an original slander that the medizing Euboeans, especially the Histiaeans living around Cape Artemisium, bribed Themistocles in order to make the Greek fleet retreat even after it had victoriously held the position.⁵⁹ Finally, according to Herodotus, the

⁵⁷ Hdt. 7.139–44. Obviously, Herodotus had at his disposal two different accounts of the Athenian assembly's discussion of the meaning of the 'Wooden Wall' the Delphic oracle had predicted would remain undamaged: one praising the whole community of the Athenians for having interpreted it as ships (followed by Herodotus up to the end of 7.142.2 [cf. *ἔσφαλλε* and *συνεχέοντο*] and then again from 7.144.2 onwards) and another eulogizing Themistocles for having refuted the allegedly discouraging line on 'Divine Salamis' (followed by Herodotus in the sections between the aforementioned marks). It was Herodotus alone who made 'Divine Salamis' the key word of the discussion. In order to combine both sources, he created the despair of those Athenians who had got the idea of ships already at the beginning of the discussion and grafted onto that despair Themistocles' crucial intervention, which otherwise would have been totally unnecessary. Cf. for further argumentation Blösel (2004), 101–7.

⁵⁸ Themistocles dupes the reluctant Corinthian Adeimantus by promising solemnly to give him much more money than the Great King would give him for leaving the Greeks in the lurch (Hdt. 8.5.2). Obviously, there were slanders not only of the allegedly treacherous Spartan and Corinthian commanders, but also of Themistocles' potential betrayal. Thus, the Herodotean anecdote is composed as a direct refutation of such a calumny.

⁵⁹ Hdt. 8.4 f. Cf. Blösel (2004), 135–45, 160–73, summarized in (2001), 181–9. For a suspected Persian agent at Cape Artemisium communicating with Themistocles, see [Them.] *Ep.* 20.21 Cortassa.

Greeks at Salamis could be forced to fight only because Themistocles had induced Xerxes by his message to encircle them (8.75). In summary, in praising Themistocles as the only champion of Greek freedom, Herodotus also makes him the representative of all the Athenians⁶⁰ whose decision in favour of an exclusively naval defence Herodotus (7.139), for his own purposes,⁶¹ glorified as decisive in repelling Xerxes' invasion.

Consequently, Herodotus' portrait of Themistocles is much more complex than numerous scholars, even the more recent ones, have thought, since they argue that he simply denigrated Themistocles' character by insinuating dishonourable motives for Themistocles' great feats.⁶² However, by recasting the many glorifying stories, as well as the denunciations of Themistocles as a traitor, Herodotus constructed his 'Themistocles' as a mirror of fifth-century Athens: both preserved Hellenic freedom in the time of Xerxes' invasion, but in the decades thereafter they indulged their avarice and exploited many other Greeks through the Delian League.⁶³

VI. THUCYDIDES' JUDGEMENT ON THEMISTOCLES

The Thucydidean depiction of Themistocles must be read against the background of Herodotus' quite sophisticated representation, which was certainly present in the minds of many contemporaries.⁶⁴ As we have seen above, Thucydides summarizes only very briefly the Greeks' fight against Xerxes by using tacitly Herodotean praise of the victor of Salamis as his basis. Through his cryptic insertion in Themistocles' alleged letter to Artaxerxes, Thucydides does not

⁶⁰ The same is true for the other Greeks' envy in refusing Themistocles the first prize for the whole war in the autumn of 480 (Hdt. 8.123, cf. 7.139.1).

⁶¹ In Herodotus' opinion, the battle of Salamis was the sudden turning point of the whole war. Before it, he shows Xerxes' high spirits swelling immoderately, whereas the Greeks allegedly become more and more desperate. Only the Athenians have laid the foundation of their salvation beforehand.

⁶² Cf. e.g. Piccirilli (1973), 344–7; Podlecki (1975), 67–72; Cresci Marrone (1986), 121–4; Ostwald (1991), 140; Patterson (1993), 146–8; Montana (2002), 289.

⁶³ Levi (1955), 265 f.; Munson (1988), 100 and Moles (2002), 47 f. suggested rather than proved this function of Themistocles' portrait. Critical of my thesis is Baragwanath (2008), 318–21.

⁶⁴ Cf. Ellis (1994), 188–90.

actually contradict, but rather indirectly confirms the Herodotean version that Themistocles did not prevent the Greeks from destroying the Hellespontine bridges. He stresses Themistocles' patriotism in the stories of the building of Athens' city walls and the fortification of the Piraeus. But there is a decisive distinction between the patriotism of the Herodotean Themistocles and that of the Thucydidean one. For, in the Persian Wars the former was the champion not only of Athens, but of all Greece as well, whereas in Thucydides Themistocles works for Athens alone, and lays the foundations of her future hegemony. Consequently, he comes into conflict with the Spartans and the other Peloponnesians. In this way, the Thucydidean Themistocles obviously anticipates Pericles' similar stance.

It is particularly disappointing that Thucydides remains totally silent on the decade between the early 470s and Themistocles' flight from Greece. He does not give any explanation for why the victor of Salamis was ostracized, although he does mention the fact. But there are some hints that Themistocles had already been charged with treason in the time before his ostracism.⁶⁵ I assume that the stories which denounced Themistocles as a traitor even during his *strategia* in 480 could easily be the basis of these early charges.⁶⁶

Since in the end he fled from Greece to Persia, his Medism in his final years is incontestable. The acid test is how Thucydides answered the crucial question of whether or not Themistocles committed treason against all Greece when he did this. As Pausanias' promise to surrender Greece to the Persians and the first stages of its fulfilment show, the offence of treason was assumed as a fact by Thucydides. Themistocles promises the same thing to the Great King, not only vaguely in his letter, but also in person when Artaxerxes receives him. But Thucydides at least stresses that unlike Pausanias Themistocles had no real opportunity to put this promise into action, nor did the Great King force him to do so. His allegedly peaceful death from illness highlights this. This version appears to be originally Thucydidean. For, if Charon of Lampsacus indeed thought that

⁶⁵ Diod. 11.54.5; Plut. *Them.* 23.4f.: ... ταῖς προτέραις κατηγορίαις ... ; Timocreon of Rhodes 727 PMG = Plut. *Them.* 21.4 from the early 470s. Cf. Blösel (2004), 60f. and 336–50.

⁶⁶ Cf. [Them.] *Ep.* 11.3 Cortassa: ... πολλοὺς ἄλλους τῶν Ἑλλήνων προδοσίαν τῆς ἐμῆς στρατηγίας καταδικάζειν ... For the credibility of this passage cf. Podlecki (1975), 132; Doenges (1981), 316f., and Blösel (2004), 346–8.

Themistocles had betrayed the Greeks after the victory of Salamis, he is likely to have preferred the story of Themistocles' suicide. In that story Themistocles allegedly drank poison because he felt incapable of keeping his promise to the king.⁶⁷ This story's drama, as well as its presentation of Themistocles' conflicted character, coheres much better with the preceding tales (which, as has been argued, probably came from Charon's pen) than the unspectacular death Thucydides favoured.

In sum, the picture of Themistocles as a traitor after his condemnation seems to have been widespread. Thus, Stesimbrotus of Thasos insinuates in his defamatory pamphlet 'On Themistocles and Thucydides (son of Melesias) and Pericles' that Themistocles went from the Molossian king to the tyrant Hiero of Syracuse and offered to make him master of all of Greece as a reward for receiving Hiero's daughter in marriage. Only after the tyrant had declined did Themistocles turn to Persia.⁶⁸ The striking similarity with the story of Pausanias demonstrates that both victors in the Persian Wars were defamed in a very schematic way.

It is alarming how little Thucydides has been able to do to counter these mostly fictitious charges. He denies, as seen above, in no way explicitly, but at the very most half-heartedly and quite cryptically, Themistocles' alleged acts of betrayal after the battle of Salamis when he putatively promised to subjugate Greece to the Great King. Presumably too many slanders were circulating at the end of the fifth century for Thucydides to refute them outright.

Therefore, Thucydides' hymnic praise of Themistocles' intellectual abilities (1.138.3) seems to me primarily an evasive changing of the subject to something undisputed. For, all the stories handed down to us, the eulogizing ones as well as the slanderous ones, represent Themistocles as extraordinarily shrewd and crafty, as foreseeing the reaction of his opponents as well as the future in general, and as rising instantaneously to all challenges with innate confidence. By stressing that Themistocles never had to learn anything in advance or to find out about it in retrospect, Thucydides may have

⁶⁷ Similarly Plut. *Them.* 31.3.—Ar. *Eq.* 83 f., 819 mentions bull's blood as the poison which Themistocles took. According to Diod. 11.58.3 the suicide was inspired by his unwillingness to harm his own people. Cf. Marr (1995) and Montana (2002), 262 f., 287 n. 63.

⁶⁸ Stesimbrotus of Thasos *FGrHist* 107 = 1002 F 3 = Plut. *Them.* 24.6. Cf. Carawan (1989), 153–6; Montana (2002), 290 f.; Keaveney (2003), 19–23.

been responding to the Herodotean anecdotes that the Athenian Mnesiphilus inspired Themistocles to fight against the resolution of the Peloponnesian commanders to flee from Salamis, and also to Herodotus' report that the Athenian Aristides informed Themistocles (and later the other commanders) about the Persians' encirclement of the Greeks at Salamis.⁶⁹ But even in Thucydides' version of Themistocles' supplication of the Molossian king, whose child he was holding in his hands, it is the latter's wife whom Themistocles has to ask for advice (1.136.3). Besides, his intellect, far-sightedness, and communicative competence do not seem to have sufficed to avoid his deposition from military command, his trials in Athens, his ostracism and his final condemnation.⁷⁰ Therefore, Thucydides is compelled to pass over this period of Themistocles' life in silence in order to leave his own panegyric unchallenged.

But Thucydides' eulogy, reduced as it is to Themistocles' intellectual capabilities only, remains very colourless precisely because it avoids taking a stand on whether or not Themistocles indeed harmed his countrymen or was at least prepared to do so.⁷¹ Modern scholars have often exculpated Thucydides for his one-sided hymn with the argument that Themistocles' special mental abilities were to foreshadow Pericles'.⁷² This is probably true; nevertheless, the Thucydidean excursus on Themistocles does not bring us any closer to one of the most disputed characters of the fifth century. Probably the authentic elements of Themistocles' life were distorted by highly biased traditions, oral and written, so that the historian of the Peloponnesian War felt unable to apply to that evidence the methods which he used for his main topic. Neither could he distil from it a coherent portrayal. Thus, he neither intended nor was able to correct

⁶⁹ Hdt. 8.57 and 8.79–81. In my opinion Mnesiphilus and Aristides serve as representatives of all Athenians to legitimate Themistocles' further actions; cf. Blösel (2004), 186–90, 222–30.

⁷⁰ Hdt. 8.125; Demosth. 23.205; Plut. *Them.* 22.1 and a potsherd from an *ostrakon* with the inscription *Θεμιστοκλει τόδε ὄστρακον [Φ]ρασίῳι [τ]ιμῆς ἡέλεικα* all demonstrate that the most important reason for his downfall was that he overplayed his hand by demanding so much public appreciation of his merits in the Persian War that his fellow citizens simply grew tired of him. Cf. Siewert (2002), 130 f. (for the *ostrakon*); 368–72 and Blösel (2004), 329–33.

⁷¹ Cf. Moles (2010), 37.

⁷² Cf. e.g. Thuc. 2.59 f.; 2.65 and Hornblower (1991), 223 ad loc.; Patterson (1993), 151; Ellis (1994), 188 f.; Rhodes (2006), 532 f.; Moles (2010), 34–9.

Herodotus' and others' depictions in any fundamental way.⁷³ Therefore, there is nothing left for us other than the highly complex and biased, albeit very colourful, anecdotes of Charon of Lampsacus, Herodotus, Stesimbrotus of Thasos, and some other storytellers from which we can get an impression of what sort of man Themistocles really was, and what he did.

Thucydides, however, is no Herodotean narrator just because he included verbatim Athenian oral traditions (for the story of the building of the city wall) and passages from Ionian storytellers (for the digressions on Pausanias and Themistocles).⁷⁴ I assume that the relevant passages in book 1 belong to a very early stage of the composition of his work.⁷⁵ Thucydides' recognition that he did not cope well with the portrayals of the victors of the Persian Wars might have confirmed him in his decision to write contemporary history.

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⁷³ *Contra* Patterson (1993), 146, 151 f. and the literature cited above, n. 1. Cf. Moles (2010), 35: Thucydides' 'constant competitiveness with Herodotus, especially in the *Pentecontaetia* but also in the Themistocles obituary, "corrective" of Herodotus not in his high estimate of Themistocles' abilities (which is essentially the same as Herodotus') but in its powerful economy and resolute exclusion of moral issues'.

⁷⁴ Cf. R. Munson, Ch. 10 in this volume.

⁷⁵ Similarly Hammond (1940), 150; Westlake (1955), 62–6; Rhodes (1970), 399 f.; Milton (1979), 259, 264.

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Persians in Thucydides

Rosaria Vignolo Munson

Thucydides' representation of Persia is inextricably linked to his response to Herodotus, who placed the Persians at the centre of his work.¹ The younger historian was well aware that for the Greeks of his time, as they were embarking on the long mutual war he describes, the most vivid cultural memory concerned their earlier resistance against the Persians, from which they derived a wealth of still current paradigms. After Xerxes' defeat, moreover, Persia continued to exist as a neighbouring power, which mainland Greeks may initially have viewed as marginal, but which ended up as the arbiter in their own war. This chapter examines Thucydides' representation of Persia's role in the history of the Greeks, what information about Persian agents, culture, and events he knows about or considers important, and his 'Persian' interactions with Herodotus.

I. THE PERSIAN WARS IN THUCYDIDES

Already in his first sentence, where he states that the Peloponnesian War affected both the Greeks and parts of the non-Greek world, and 'so to speak, most of mankind' (1.1.2), Thucydides appears to signal his awareness of the role that Persia will play after 412 BCE.² On the other hand, here and in subsequent introductory chapters,

¹ On Thucydides' knowledge of Herodotus, see esp. Hornblower (1992) and (1996), 19–38.

² 1.1.1; See Gomme (1945), 91; cf. 2.65.7.

Thucydides is looking not forwards, but backwards as he emphasizes the enormity of 'his' war in comparison to earlier ones. Persia was a great power (1.16) and Xerxes' invasion represented a time of danger for Greece (1.18.1–2). But for the benefit of readers who in retrospect might be inclined to consider the Persian attacks on Greece worthy of the Great Historical Watershed Award of all times, Thucydides minimizes it in quantitative terms that are hard to counter: it was a short affair, after all, quickly resolved in two naval and two infantry battles (1.23.1).

In a groundbreaking 1999 article, Tim Rood demonstrated Thucydides' awareness of the importance of the Greeks' resistance to Persia for their later history, and showed the influence of that conflict (and of Herodotus' account of it) on Thucydides' shaping of his own narrative. Rood's analysis served as a healthy corrective to the erroneous view that Thucydides has no interest in the Persian Wars and is contemptuous of Herodotus. We should recognize, however, that on this score Thucydides is sending somewhat of a double message. If the Persian Wars represent an important subtext in Thucydides' narrative, he also signals, especially in the first five books, that contemporary history has moved on.

In Thucydides, references to the Persian Wars occur mostly in speeches as a means for gaining the diplomatic advantage in international disputes just before or during the new Greek-on-Greek conflict.³ Two overlapping themes predominate. One is the magnification or devaluation of the role of different cities during the Greek resistance.⁴ The contrasting facts and interpretations put forth by Thucydidean speakers emerge as strands recycled from the fabric of Herodotus' comprehensive narrative, but here they appear dismembered and recontextualized, a fact that underlines the distinction, which both Herodotus and Thucydides make in their own way, between investigation and rhetorical attempts to capitalize on the past.⁵ Such arguments, however, are not usually effective in contemporary negotiations: most Thucydidean speakers who magnify the Persian War and their role in it lose the debate. Several speakers

³ In the first seven books speakers mention the Persians only when speaking about the Persian Wars. The (implicit) reference in Archidamus' speech at 1.82.1 (see below, p. 256) is an exception.

⁴ Athenians (1.73–75) vs. Sthenelaidas (1.86) and Corinthians (1.69); Plataeans (3.54, 56–9) vs. Thebans (3.62–4); Euphemos at Camarina (6.83).

⁵ Cf. esp. Dewald (1999).

on both sides seem to recognize the irrelevance of the topic when they more or less explicitly decline to rehash that event.⁶

The second theme of Thucydidean discourses is to suggest structural analogies between the Persian War past and current circumstances.⁷ The Corinthians depict Athens as a polis *turannos* that conquers, rather than liberates, the Greeks, and represent Athens as unlike her former self and equivalent to Persia (1.68, 122.2–3, 123.3). Pro-Athenian speakers, by contrast, emphasize the continuity between the bold Athenians who embarked on the ships and defeated the Persians and their contemporary descendants, who ‘become islanders’ to resist the Peloponnesian invasions, or can fight on many fronts at the same time.⁸

The narrator in his own voice is more reluctant to make explicit comparative references.⁹ Aside from the dismissive evaluation at 1.23.1, we find only two more mentions of the Persian War in books 1–7. Thucydides’ statement that the Athenians in the imminence of the first Peloponnesian invasion were aggrieved at having to leave their farms ‘which they had just restored after the Median War’ (2.16) reformulates Pericles’ parallel with the evacuation of Attica at the time of Xerxes (1.144) by focusing on the renewal and multiplication of a painful experience.¹⁰ The second reference compares the Spartan hoplites at Sphacteria, who ended up surrendering to the enemy, to the Spartans at Thermopylae, who died defending the pass (4.36.3).¹¹ This clear allusion to Herodotus, underlined by an apology in Herodotus’ manner for comparing ‘small things with great’,¹² represents an early sign of Thucydides’ appreciation of the moral dimension of the war that will emerge more clearly in his account of the Sicilian Expedition. There the speakers’ explicit references to Xerxes’ invasion (6.17.7, 33.5, 83) are integrated in a narrative structure informed by intertextuality with Herodotus.

⁶ Rood (1999), 145.

⁷ The comparison is embedded in the speeches cited in n. 4, except that of the Plataeans. See also Mytileneans (3.10) and Hermocrates (6.33.5). Connor (1984), 93; and Rood (1999), 150.

⁸ 1.143.5, 144.3–4, 6.17.7. Cf. Rood (1999), 147.

⁹ Cf., however, 1.98.4 and Pelling (2000), 96.

¹⁰ Cf. Rood (1999), 149.

¹¹ Thucydides’ mention of ‘the path’ (4.36.3) echoes Hdt. 7.175.2 and 7.212.2. Hornblower (1996), 32–4 and 191. Thuc. 4.40.2 contrasts with Hdt. 7.226. See Foster, Ch. 8 above.

¹² Cf. Hdt. 2.10.1 and 4.99.5.

The moralistic slant of each campaign story is the same, with hubris punished in both cases.¹³ Finally in book 8, the evocation of the past is less tidy but, as we shall see below (§§VI–IX), the narrator will take on a greater share of the discourse and draw attention to parallels and reversals with respect to different moments of the Persian Wars.

II. THUCYDIDES AND THE NON-GREEK WORLD

In spite of the recent re-evaluation of the influence of Herodotus on Thucydides, it cannot be denied that, with a partial but notable exception (the Pausanias–Themistocles excursus, on which see below), Thucydides does not focus on Persia per se, its extent, its resources, its imperial structure, its people, or its king, not even in the parts of book 1 (the Archaeology and Pentecontaetia) that would have given him the occasion to do so. This stance vis-à-vis the Persians agrees with Thucydides' relative lack of interest in barbarians in general,¹⁴ and both are partly manifestations of what scholars have described (with some truth, *pace* Rudd) as his ideological rejection of Herodotus and of Herodotus' way of doing history.¹⁵

Perhaps more importantly, Thucydides' ignore-the-barbarian brand of Hellenocentrism reflects the geopolitical situation of his time and a post-Cimonian and Periclean focus on Athenian predominance in Greece and the Aegean, which sees Thrace and the coasts of Anatolia as the virtual eastern and northern borders of the empire. In Thucydides' synoptic view of different theatres,¹⁶ non-Greek peoples remain at the margins, more the object of the sideways glances when Greeks have dealings with them than of a curious gaze. Even his Sicilian insertion (6.1–6), though it represents a Herodotean literary manoeuvre in many respects, is no ethnography in the manner of Herodotus. Only rarely does Thucydides describe foreign customs synchronically, just as also in the historical narrative the *nomoi* and *tropoi* of foreigners do not usually appear among the most

¹³ For the specific narrative parallels and differences, see esp. Rood (1999), 152–64; Connor (1984), 175–6, 183, 197–202; and Cornford (1907), 88–220. See also the different intertextual argument of Kallet (2001), 85–95.

¹⁴ Cf. his reductive attitude at 1.5–6. Gomme (1945), 10.

¹⁵ See Greenwood (2006), 7.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 42–3.

compelling motives or causes.¹⁷ In his portrayal of barbarians, nothing compares with his exploration of the *ethos* and ethnic identity of Athenians, Spartans, Dorians, Ionians, or other Greeks.¹⁸

A partial exception is represented in Thucydides' treatment of Thrace, where he had family connections and property.¹⁹ The Thracians are the subject of an ethnographically informative passage (2.95–101) that includes a catalogue of tribes (2.96); measurements of distances ('at the fastest four days and four nights for a merchant ship with the wind astern the whole way, while by land a man travelling light by the shortest road, can get from Abdera to the Danube in eleven days', 2.97.1–2);²⁰ and the enumeration of the tribute and gifts paid to the Odrysian king and nobles in gold and silver, embroidered cloth and other objects (2.97.3). All this is worthy of Herodotus' Scythian and Thracian *logoi* or his catalogue of the tributes of Persian satrapies (see esp. Hdt. 3.97), showing what Thucydides can do when he has 'been there'. This discussion of tributes, however, leads to the report of a local Thracian custom that shows Thucydides' ideological distance from Herodotus' perspective:

For they established a custom opposite to that prevailing in the Persian kingdom, which also the other Thracians have, namely of taking rather than giving (it is more shameful for them not to give when asked than to ask and not receive), but anyway, they practised it as much as possible. For it was impossible to get anything done without a present. (2.97.4–5)

Thucydides here explains how Sitalces' empire has grown to the point of inviting comparison with the Persian, thanks to an elaborate tributary system. But with the inverted parallel he seems to pivot from the topic of imperial revenues to that of bribes: the Odrysians are takers, just as the Persians are notorious givers (especially to Greeks).²¹ Unlike Herodotus, Thucydides is no objective ethnographer and

¹⁷ See Ostwald (1988); cf. Munson (2001b), 43–5.

¹⁸ As Connor rightly saw (1984: 36–47), the national characters of Athens and Sparta in particular are for Thucydides an integral part of the causality of the war, and Thucydides pursues the issue throughout his history. Cf. e.g. 7.44, 58.

¹⁹ At 4.105 Thucydides says he had interests in the gold mines in the neighbourhood of Amphipolis and was influential with the natives in the area, where he was also general in 424 BCE. The name of Thucydides' father, Olorus, is evidence of Thracian descent. See Hornblower (1987), 1.

²⁰ For Thucydides' expression *ἀνὴρ ἐϋζωνος*, see Herodotus 1.72.3, 1.104.1, 2.34.2. Hornblower (1991), 372.

²¹ See below, 1.109.2 (pp. 248–9); 8.83.3, 45.

rather speaks as a public executive and a business mogul ('one can get nothing done without gifts'). Similarly, his generalization about the cowardice and ferocity of the Thracians in the account of the Mycalessus massacre (7.29.4) expresses in blistering terms the military man's contempt for non-Greeks with whom he has dealt directly.

III. PERSIANS IN THE PENTECONTAETIA

Aside from book 8, the greatest number of references to the Persians of the period after the Persian Wars in the voice of the narrator occurs in two analeptic narratives of book 1, the Pentecontaetia and the excursus on Pausanias and Themistocles. The first passage is an account of the growth of Athenian power from 479 to 434 BCE. It is preliminary to Thucydides' narrative of the war and does not claim to be detailed or complete.²² Here the Persians are marginal: in spite of the fact that these events are even further from Herodotus' topic than from Thucydides', Herodotus' scattered references provide more information on Persian events between the two wars.

Thucydides informs us that the pretext for the foundation of the Delian League was retaliation against the Persians.²³ In the account that follows, Athenian dealings with Persian interests occupy only about a third of the whole, with the balance mostly consisting of military or diplomatic actions involving other Greeks. As a selective sample of the character of the League's activities in its early years, Thucydides begins by listing aggressive operations in four places: Eion, Scyros, Carystus, and Naxos (1.98.1–4). The last of these is the occasion for Thucydides' important reflection on Athenian subjection of rebellious members of the League (1.99). The first, the only one involving the Persians directly, is brutally brief: under the leadership of Cimon the Athenians took Eion from the Medes and enslaved its inhabitants.

A proleptic narrative of the same event appears in Herodotus' account of Xerxes' march through Thrace, where two Persian governors will win the gratitude of the king for their gallant resistance at

²² Cf. Rood (1998), 225–48.

²³ *πρόσχημα*, 1.96.1. Cf. Hornblower (1991), 144.

the time of the Delian League operations Thucydides summarizes. One of these men was the governor of Eion, Boges, who refused to surrender under siege and immolated himself on a pyre with his children, wives, concubines, and all the city's gold and silver (7.107.1–2). The contrast between Herodotus' arresting description and Thucydides' account shows Herodotus, unlike Thucydides, focusing on the non-Greek side, and seizing the opportunity (in the midst of his account of Xerxes' aggression!) to illustrate and translate Persian notions of ἀγαθία through the spectacular actions of specific Persians. Also unlike Thucydides, Herodotus displays familiarity with the Persian nobility and its ethical and political stance.²⁴ More generally, Herodotus takes the conflict, contrast, possible analogies or overlaps between the Eastern and the Western world-views as his overarching theme.

From a historical or 'current events' perspective, this portion of Thucydides' work treats the Persians as old news. This markedly differs from the attitude of Herodotus, who is sensitive to the multi-levelled significance of the past he celebrates for the present of narration and of the continuity between earlier and later events.²⁵ Moreover, Herodotus places the Persian and inter-Greek wars along a continuum of imperialistic evils,²⁶ while Thucydides' Pentecontaetia as a whole arguably emphasizes the break between the two wars.

Already at the time of the capture of Sestos the Spartans have withdrawn from the common effort (1.89.2); soon they will abandon it for good (1.94–5). At Athens, although the alliance with Sparta is still intact (1.92), the hero of Salamis is intent on outwitting the Spartans, (1.90–3), and no longer the Persian king.²⁷ It is Thucydides' opinion (ὥς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ) that Themistocles drew his lesson on the importance of defence by sea from the Persian War (see 1.93.7), but his antagonism with the Peloponnesians was new. The narrator appears to agree with this position.²⁸ Soon after Themistocles disappeared from the political scene, in fact, the definitive dissolution

²⁴ For Herodotus' access to Persian sources, see Munson (2009). On Thucydides' lack of familiarity with the Persians, cf. Westlake (1985), 43.

²⁵ Cf. esp. Fornara (1971), 57–84.

²⁶ Cf. 6.98; Stadter (1992); Munson (2001a), 201–5.

²⁷ Cf. Hdt. 8.75 and 8.110.2. See below, p. 254 and n. 60 for Thucydides' reference to variant versions of those Herodotean episodes.

²⁸ See Thucydides' praise of Themistocles' foresight at 1.138.3 and his emphasis on the impermanence of the Spartan–Athenian alliance at 1.18.3.

of the alliance between Sparta and Athens (1.102–3) confirmed that a new era had begun.

The Athenians, of course, continue to pursue a vigorous anti-Persian policy, but the focus of Thucydides' narrative is elsewhere. Cimon's double victory at the Eurymedon receives only a brief mention (1.100). The Athenians' massive and disastrous six-year campaign to Egypt in support of the rebel Inaros (1.104 and 109–10) seems to anticipate some of the themes of the Sicilian Expedition.²⁹ But Thucydides' choice not to develop this section makes what must have been a huge blow for Athens and a triumph for Persia appear rather inconsequential in the longer term.³⁰ It also minimizes the themes of bad counsel and overreaching that are so prominent in the Sicilian narrative, substituting an emphasis on the Athenians' resilience and activism in the pursuit of empire, which is the major theme of the Pentecontaetia.³¹ A few years later, in fact, Thucydides places the Athenians in Cyprus with two hundred new ships and again in Egypt (1.112.1–3).³² How these anti-Persian operations wind down remains unclear: of an end of the war with Persia he says not a word.³³

On Persian operations related to the Egyptian war, Thucydides appears well informed. He reports the (presumably secret) royal mission of a certain Megabazus, who tried to bribe the Spartans into

²⁹ See esp. 1.110.1: 'Only a few of many managed to escape to Cyrene marching through Libya, but most died' (ὀλίγοι ἀπὸ πολλῶν πορευόμενοι διὰ τῆς Λιβύης εἰς Κυρήνην ἐσώθησαν, οἱ δὲ πλείστοι ἀπώλοντο); 1.110.4: '[the Phoenicians] destroyed most of the ships, and only a small number managed to escape' (διέφθειραν τὰς πολλὰς τῶν νεῶν, αἱ δ' ἐλάσσους διέφυγον πάλιν); 'this was the outcome of the great expedition of the Athenians and their allies to Egypt' (τὰ μὲν κατὰ τὴν μεγάλην στρατείαν Ἀθηναίων καὶ τῶν συμμαχῶν εἰς Αἴγυπτον οὕτως ἐτελεύτησεν). Cf. 7.87.6: 'few out of many returned home; and these were the events in Sicily' (ὀλίγοι ἀπὸ πολλῶν ἐπ' οἴκου ἀπενόστησαν. ταῦτα μὲν τὰ περὶ Σικελίαν γεγόμενα).

³⁰ Cf. Hornblower (1991), 173–8, who also explains what losing the control of Egypt would have meant for Persia. For a fuller account of the Athenian expedition to Egypt (c.460–454), see Diodorus 11.71–5.

³¹ Thucydides seems to have considered (or reconsidered) the Sicilian expedition in similar terms. The end of book 7 almost suggests the obliteration of all Athenian hopes, but at 2.65.12 Thucydides coolly observes that the disaster did not prevent Athens from pursuing the larger war for eight more years; likewise, the beginning of book 8 emphasizes Athenian resilience.

³² For this campaign, see also Plut. *Cim.* 18.5–9, and cf. Diod. 12.3–4, with Briant (2002), 579.

³³ On the Peace of Callias and its aftermath, see esp. Diod. 12.4.4–5. Andrewes (1961), 15–18; Kagan (1969), 107–13; Rood (1998), 229.

invading Attica, and he mentions the general of the Persian army in Egypt, Megabyzus son of Zopyrus (1.109.2–3).³⁴ In Herodotus, Zopyrus recaptures Babylon during the reign of Darius; Herodotus also mentions his son Megabyzus (confirming the role Thucydides attributes to him in Egypt) as well as Megabyzus' son Zopyrus (Hdt. 3.160.2). This younger Zopyrus may well have been one of Herodotus' sources for matters of Persian history drawn from his remarkable family tradition.³⁵ But since according to Herodotus he defected to the Athenians, he may also have talked to *Thucydides* about more recent events, including the strenuous Persian attempt to regain control of Egypt under his father's command.³⁶ If so, Thucydides has not fully exploited that opportunity. He says nothing about the initial revolt of Egypt from Persia, except that it was the occasion for the Delian League's intervention in support of Inaros. Herodotus, by contrast, brings up this revolt three more times in addition to the passage just cited (3.160.1). After saying that at the site where Cambyses defeated Psammenitos in 525 he saw proof that Persian skulls are soft and Egyptian skulls very hard, Herodotus adds that he was able to verify this phenomenon 'among the bodies of the dead at Papremis, where Achaemenes, the son of Darius, was defeated by Inaros of Libya' (3.12.4).

Later in the *Histories*, Herodotus specifies that this Achaemenes had become governor of Egypt after his brother Xerxes suppressed a previous revolt and instituted a harsher regime, and that Achaemenes subsequently died at the hands of the Libyan Inaros, son of Psammenitos (7.7).³⁷ In spite of Inaros' wrongdoings, says Herodotus in a third passage (3.15.3–4), his son Thamyras eventually obtained from the king the governorship of Egypt. From this and other cases Herodotus infers that 'the Persians are accustomed (ἐώθασιν) to honour the children of kings; even if they rebel from them, nevertheless they at least give power back to their children'

³⁴ Besides the Megabazus and Megabyzus in this passage, and the kings, Persian individuals mentioned by Thucydides are Pissouthnes, Artabazus (son of Pharnaces I), Pharnaces II (grandson of Pharnaces I and son of Pharnabazus I), Pharnabazus II (son of Pharnaces II), Megabates, Artaphernes, Tissaphernes, Tamus, Arsaces, and Cyrus the Younger. Cf. Lewis (1977).

³⁵ See Wells (1907); Munson (2009), 464.

³⁶ See Ghimadaye (1983), cited by Hornblower (1991), 164.

³⁷ Cf. Thuc. 1.104.1 ('Psammetichus'). For fuller accounts of the Egyptian revolt and Athenian expedition there, see Ctesias F 14.36–8 Lenfant, and Diodorus 11.71 and 74.

(3.15.2). Herodotus is in the business of observing all sorts of differences among nations. Here his ethnographic impulse produces insights about the interface between culture and policy in the area of Persian relations with subject peoples. Throughout his work he holds up Persian affairs for display as implicit terms of comparison for the imperial challenges, especially revolts, of the type that Thucydides describes in his history of the Athenian Empire.

Thucydides, for his part, pays attention to the Persians only insofar as they potentially affect Greek interests. On the coast of Asia in particular it was not uncommon for factions in the cities of the Athenian League to seek help from the neighbouring satraps.³⁸ Thucydides omits most of these incidents, but the last Persian passage in his *Pentecontaetia* records that at the time of the secession of Samos, the Persian governor of Sardis, Pissouthnes son of Hystaspes, supported the rebels. On that occasion the Athenians were worried about the imminent arrival of the Phoenician fleet, which however never materialized (1.115–16). More spectacular, though equally inconclusive, had been earlier intrigues of Pausanias and Themistocles with the Persians. The section where Thucydides tells this story presents special features and deserves to be examined separately.

IV. PAUSANIAS, THEMISTOCLES, AND THE PERSIANS

The Pausanias–Themistocles section is composed of two analeptic passages inserted contiguously at the end of book 1 (1.128–34 and 1.135–8). At this point in the chronological development of the main narrative, the outbreak of the new Greek-on-Greek conflict is imminent. The Spartans have issued an ultimatum demanding that the Athenians drive out the almost two-centuries-old Alcmaeonid curse. The Athenians have responded by bidding the Spartans to clean up some curses of their own (1.128.1–2). Since the Spartans incurred one of these when they caused the death of Pausanias, Thucydides takes the opportunity to tell the latter's post-Persian War

³⁸ e.g. probably in Erythrae (see ML 40), Sigeum (*ATL* III 55), Miletus (*ATL* II 57–60) and Caria (*ATL* III 114–17 and 308). For the last, see Kagan (1969), 179, also 98–102; Briant (2002), 580.

story (1.127–34), to which he attaches the post-Persian War story of Themistocles at the point where the two stories appear to intersect (1.135–8). This internal transition further distances the sequence from its initial factual connection to the main narrative.

The insertion is an unexpected throwback to the past in more ways than one. Its optional character and the manner in which it spins off are in themselves typical of Herodotus. With both Athenians and Spartans accusing each other of religious offences committed long ago, Herodotus might have said that his *logos* required him to explain the circumstances of those earlier events (see e.g. Hdt. 1.95.1). By Thucydides' usual standards, however, these grievances are not genuine enough and therefore not causally important enough for the outbreak of the war to merit explanation. Just as they are mere diplomatic pretexts in the world of the narrated (1.126.1), so they also constitute a blatant pretext for the analepses from the point of view of Thucydides' discourse. Thucydides has already treated Themistocles and Pausanias (in this order) in the Pentecontaetia.³⁹ His choice to add more at this point or, to put it another way, to sever this material from its proper chronological context, provides a clue that the excursus has a paradigmatic and thematic role. The excursus represents a reflection on general issues that will be important in the rest of the work, such as the nature of leadership in connection to the Spartan and the Athenian character. It therefore prepares the reader for the entrance of Pericles, Thucydides' protagonist and the ultimate leader in the war that is about to begin.⁴⁰

These insights explain the anomalous position of the section, but not so much its oddity in form and contents. The Pausanias–Themistocles excursus appears to replace what we have called Thucydides' overall rejection of Herodotus (see above, p. 244) with an imitation of Herodotus, adopting this author's favorite structure, diction, historical method, and focus. It includes aspects of what we would expect Thucydides to regard as legendary (a partial sense of *τὸ*

³⁹ 1.89.3–95.7; see above, §III. For the 'Herodotean' flavour of Thucydides' narrative about Themistocles and the walls at 1.89.3–93.7, see Blösel, above, pp. 216–18.

⁴⁰ Most concise on this point is Finley (1942), 139. On 'Pausanias–Themistocles' from a literary viewpoint, see also esp. Cornford (1907), 135–7; Konishi (1970); Westlake (1977); Connor (1984), 48–9; Carawan (1989); Hornblower (1987), 26 and (1991), 211–12; Patterson (1993); Rood (1998), 138 and 180. There is also a substantial bibliography on the difficulties of this passage from the point of view of the historical Pausanias or Themistocles or both; see e.g. Lang (1967).

μυθῶδες at 1.22.4): a biographical interest of Eastern stamp,⁴¹ the introduction of probably fictional letters,⁴² attention to personal motives, and the appearance of a female character in an active role.⁴³ Here we also find the subdivision of the narrative through summarizing introductions and conclusions,⁴⁴ a leisurely narrative pace and simple style,⁴⁵ the Herodotean use of certain words,⁴⁶ metanarrative references to research, hearsay, or tradition,⁴⁷ the presence of poetic or exotic-sounding expressions,⁴⁸ celebration through superlatives,⁴⁹ and the description of enduring memorials.⁵⁰ Many of these features individually occur elsewhere in Thucydides. But the sheer accumulation of them in a single narrative at the end of book 1, when we have already grown accustomed to a certain Thucydidean style, is designed to throw the reader off balance.

The way in which the excursus deals with Persia is also Herodotean and contradicts what we have noticed so far about Thucydides' criteria of selection. In the first place, it highlights Persian customs and institutions in an uncharacteristic way. The term *σατραπεία*, which Herodotus defines as a province of the

⁴¹ Cf. Momigliano (1993), 34–8.

⁴² Pausanias to Xerxes (1.128.7), Xerxes to Pausanias (1.129.3), and Themistocles to Xerxes (137.4), the first two introduced with the prospective *τάδε* (instead of *τοιαῦτα*) in the Herodotean manner. Cf. in Herodotus the letters of Harpagus to Cyrus (1.124), Amasis to Polycrates (3.40). Cf. Westlake (1977), 102–3. For a detailed re-examination of the Themistocles excursus, see now Blösel, Ch. 9 above, pp. 223–36.

⁴³ Admetus's wife at 1.136.3; cf. in Hdt. Mitrades's wife (1.111), etc. For Gomme (1945), 438 the supplication episode resonates of tragedy, while for Carawan (1989), 154 the scene recalls Odysseus' supplication of Arete (*Od.* 7.133–81). Herodotean storytelling frequently combines epic and dramatic elements.

⁴⁴ For prospective introductions, see e.g. *ἐγένετο δὲ τοιόνδε* at 1.128.3, and see further 128.4, 128.6, 129.3. For retrospective conclusions, see 1.129.1 (*τοσαῦτα μὲν ἡ γραφή ἐδήλου*) as well as the solemn close of the entire double narrative at 1.138.6.

⁴⁵ 'Here the lion smiled', says the scholiast with relief.

⁴⁶ e.g. *Σπαρτιάται* as synonym for *Λακεδαιμόνιοι* at 1.128.3, 131.1, 132.1 (as frequently in Hdt.). The expression *τὸν Ἑλληνικὸν πόλεμον* apparently to mean 'the war of the Greeks (against Persia)' at 1.128.3 is not found in 5th-cent. authors; see also *ἐνδύμενος* (1.130.1). Cf. Westlake (1977), 97–102.

⁴⁷ See below, p. 255.

⁴⁸ *δορὶ ἐλών*, 'having captured them by the spear' (1.128.7); *σε μήτε νύξ μήθ' ἡμέρα ἐπισχέτω ὥστε ἀνεῖναι πράσσειν τι ὧν ἐμοὶ ὑπισχνῇ*, 'let neither night nor day keep you from doing what you promise me' (1.129.3).

⁴⁹ 1.138.3: *βεβαιότατα ... κράτιστος ... ἄριστος*; 1.138.6: *λαμπροτάτους γενομένους τῶν καθ' αὐτοὺς Ἑλλήνων*.

⁵⁰ 1.134.4 (the burial of Pausanias and subsequent Spartan dedications); 132.2–3 (Pausanias' inscribed tripod at Delphi); 138.5–6 (monument to Themistocles in the agora of Magnesia and secret burial in Attica).

Persian Empire, appears only here in Thucydides (1.129.1).⁵¹ Persian *εὐεργεσία*—in the sense of ‘benefactions’ to the king—is a feature of Achaemenid internal policy emphasized by Herodotus.⁵² The expression *ἀνὴρ πιστός* (1.128.7) to denote the king’s faithful, also appears in Herodotus in an Achaemenid context, as does *ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός*, as we have already seen.⁵³ Direct communications between Greek individuals and the king are frequent in Herodotus, but occur only here in Thucydides. The narrative trope of noting that ‘the king rejoiced’ after reading Pausanias’ letter (*Ξέρξης δὲ ἡσθη . . . τῇ ἐπιστολῇ*, 1.129.1) recalls several passages in Herodotus where an eastern monarch is pleased (or not) with his adviser.⁵⁴ It is paralleled by the king’s reaction to the letter of Themistocles (1.138.1, *βασιλεὺς . . . ἐθαύμασε*), whom Thucydides himself praises as *ἄξιος θαυμάσαι* at 1.138.3.⁵⁵ Artaxerxes rewards Themistocles with the gift of three cities in Asia (1.138.5); to Pausanias Xerxes offers unlimited resources in gold, silver, and military forces (1.129.3). Thucydides has a lot to say elsewhere on the subject of Persians and money (especially in book 8), but the insistence on visible symbols of Eastern wealth (gold and silver, *et sim.*), only paralleled by Thucydides’ description of the Odrysian Empire, is another Herodotean trait.⁵⁶

⁵¹ 1.129.1. Hdt. translates *σατραπεία* at 1.192.2 and 3.89.1. The term *σατράπης* does not occur until Xenophon; Herodotus and Thucydides use *ὑπαρχων* (rather loosely) or *ἄρχων* for the Persian governor of a province. Cf. Munson (2005), 56.

⁵² See 1.128.4, *εὐεργεσίαν . . . ἐς βασιλέα*; 1.129.3, *κείσεται σοι εὐεργεσία ἐν τῷ ἡμετέρῳ οἴκῳ ἐς αἰεὶ ἀνάγραφτος*, where *ἀνάγραφτος* refers to the special list on which the king’s benefactors were inscribed (cf. *εὐεργέτης βασιλέος ἀνέγραφή* in Herodotus 8.85.3); 1.137.4, *μοι εὐεργεσία ὀφείλεται*. Herodotus gives the Persian term *orosangai* for the *εὐεργέται* or benefactors of the king of Persia (8.85.3), and throughout his work mentions several individuals who earned this position. Cf. Munson (2005), 57. The term *εὐεργέτης* is of course also used for expectation of Greek-on-Greek reciprocity, an important theme in Herodotus as well as in this Thucydidean passage: see 1.136.1, where Themistocles is called *εὐεργέτης* of the Corcyraeans (1.136.1).

⁵³ Cf. also Xerxes’ injunction to Pausanias *πράσσειν ὡς ἄριστα καὶ πιστότατα* (1.129.2). *πιστότατος* is also used of Argilius at 1.132.5. For *πιστός* in Herodotus in a Medo-Persian context, see e.g. 1.108.3, 113.3, 3.74.1; *ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός* occurs, for example, in the description of Boges, the governor of Eion at 7.107.1 cited above, p. 247.

⁵⁴ Cf. Gomme (1945), 432. See e.g. 8.69.2 (Xerxes vs. Artemisia).

⁵⁵ Herodotus typically expresses ‘wonder’ and attributes it to his characters; see e.g. 7.204 and 208.3.

⁵⁶ For the Odrysian Empire at 2.97, see above, pp. 245–6. Cf. also 2.13 for Athenian gold.

Writing like Herodotus, Thucydides completes and corrects two biographies his predecessor had purposely left unfinished.⁵⁷ He vividly fleshes out Herodotus' references to Pausanias' hubris and his desire to be the ruler of Greece.⁵⁸ He manipulates the pattern of the individual Greek who tries to find favour with the king of Persia, so that Pausanias acquires certain stereotypical features of the Herodotean Themistocles.⁵⁹ Themistocles' letter to Artaxerxes in Thucydides reproduces and internally confirms that Themistocles had sent messages to Xerxes, as reported by Herodotus. Thucydides' account of Themistocles' flight to Persia shows the fulfilment of Herodotus' proleptic reference to the same outcome.⁶⁰ Pausanias' offer to marry Xerxes' daughter (1.128.7) smacks of a tall tale competing with the more restrained tradition in Herodotus that Pausanias, 'if the story is true', became engaged to the daughter of Megabates, a cousin of Darius who was general in west Asia before the Ionian Revolt.⁶¹ The issue of cultural differences, fundamental in Herodotus, but normally ignored by Thucydides, is also conspicuous in this passage. Thucydides' Pausanias, like the Herodotean Scyles (4.78), transgresses his national space and norms in diet, dress, and

⁵⁷ Patterson (1993), 146 is largely on target here, and see also Hornblower (1991), 211. Herodotus' treatment of Pausanias and Themistocles, however, is itself ironical, in the sense that it counts on his audience's awareness of the unfortunate end of both leaders. See Fornara (1971), 62–74.

⁵⁸ Thuc. 1.128. 3 ἐφιέμενος τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς ἀρχῆς 'aiming at the rule of Greece' corresponds to Hdt. 5.32 ἔρωτα σχῶν τῆς Ἑλλάδος τύραννος γενέσθαι; cf. Thucydides' statement at 1.95.3 that his position seemed to the Greeks an imitation or tyranny more than a generalship. At 1.130.2 Thucydides expands Herodotus' reference to the ὕβρις of Pausanias (Hdt. 8.3.2) with a description of his violent ways. He becomes 'difficult to approach' (δυσπρόσδοκόν ... ὁμοίως ὥστε μηδένα δύνασθαι προσίεναι, 130.2), recalling both the royal inaccessibility of Deioces (Hdt. 1.96) and the tyrannical rages of Cambyses (Hdt. 3.27–36) and Cleomenes (Hdt. 6.75.1).

⁵⁹ See the intermediary Gongylus at 1.128.6 corresponding to Sicynnus in Herodotus 8.75 and 8.110.2. The ναύκληρος in Thucydides 1.137.2–3 fulfils a similar function. For the pattern of the Greek exile in Persia, cf. Boedeker (1987), 191–3.

⁶⁰ See Thuc. 1.137.4, referring to the messages reported by Herodotus 8.75 (before Salamis) and 8.109 (after Salamis, with the proleptic reference to Themistocles' flight to Persia at 110.5).

⁶¹ Hdt. 5.32.1. This is probably the Megabates of Thuc. 1.129.1, governor of Dascyleion until Xerxes replaced him with Artabazus son of Pharnaces in response to Pausanias' appeal. The name of Pharnaces appears as *Parnaka* of the Persepolis fortification tablets. Another of his sons, Pharnabazus, is the father of Pharnaces II, the destinatary of the Spartan embassy at Thuc. 2.67 and the father of the famous Pharnabazus of book 8. Cf. Lewis (1977), 7–11, 52; Hornblower (1991), 215.

demeanour (1.130.1).⁶² As a fugitive from his land, Themistocles adopts foreign ways, although he remains productive and sane: 'he learned as much as he could of the Persian language and of the customs of the country' (1.138.1).

In the Pausanias–Themistocles excursus, metanarrative references justify the origin of some of the information (ὥς ὕστερον ἀνηνρέθη, 1.128.6), or caution the reader that certain parts of the story are the product of hearsay (ὥς λέγεται, 1.132.5 and 138.1; λέγεται, 1.134.1; φασί, 1.138.6); on one occasion, the narrator proposes an alternate version (λέγουσι δέ τινες, 1.138.4). All this conforms to Herodotus' practice of λέγειν τὰ λεγόμενα, and not to Thucydides' model of processing his research in advance and out of view.

Because the whole Pausanias–Themistocles section is pervaded by 'an aura of Ionian *ἱστορίη*', to use the words of one scholar, many think that Thucydides composed it early in his career.⁶³ What is more important and certain, at any rate, is that it was rather late in his career that Thucydides *chose to include it at this point of his work*. Regardless of its origins, the piece functions in its present context as a ventriloquist display of a type of historiography Thucydides had rejected by the time he settled on his own special method and project.⁶⁴ It is tempting to regard it as Thucydides' farewell to Herodotus, and to the topics, method, and style Herodotus stood for. At a close range, that is, the alienation from Greece of the two most distinguished Persian War heroes (see *λαμπροτάτους* at 1.138.6) signals the irrelevance of that past: in Pausanias, Thucydides sees the corruption of the old Panhellenic ideal and in Themistocles the albeit premature foresight to move away from it. Thucydides' praise of Themistocles (1.138.3)—somewhat closer to his usual style—forms a 'natural bridge' to the entrance of Pericles, who in the 'now' of the main narrative inherits Themistocles' role.⁶⁵

⁶² The language of *nomos* is prominent here: ἐν τῷ καθεστῶτι τρόπῳ (1.130.1), ἐξεδεδήτητο τῶν καθεστώτων νομίμων (1.132.2), (χρῶμενοι τῷ τρόπῳ ᾧπερ εἰώθασιν ἐς σφᾶς αὐτοὺς) (1.132.5).

⁶³ Westlake (1977), 96, arguing for the existence of a written source (Charon of Lampsacus); see also Carawan (1989) (Stesimbrotus of Thasos). These theories are speculative, but they remind us that Herodotus need not have been the only model.

⁶⁴ I suggest as a parallel the beginning of the *Histories* (1.1–5), where Herodotus makes a few important points even while he gives a demonstration of what he does not intend to do in his work.

⁶⁵ Hornblower (1991), 223, who especially notices the parallelism between *κράτιστος αὐτοσχεδιάζειν τὰ δέοντα*, of Themistocles at 1.138.3 and *οὐδενὸς ἦσσαν . . . γνῶναι τε τὰ δέοντα καὶ ἐρμενεῦσαι ταῦτα* of Pericles at 2.60.5.

For the long range, however, the past will be far from irrelevant. In fact, the paradigm of Pausanias and Themistocles was perhaps prophetic, and destined to reappear again, together with Persia, in the figures of the Athenian Alcibiades and Tissaphernes at the end of the work as we have it, and in the figures of the Spartan Lysander and Cyrus in the projected ending Thucydides never wrote. But in that later part of the *History*, from what we are able to see, Thucydides' recognition of Herodotus takes a very different form.

V. PERSIA IN THE ARCHIDAMIAN WAR

The machinations of Pausanias and Themistocles, Megabazus' embassy to Sparta (1.109.2), and Pissuthnes' support of the revolt of Samos (1.115–16) already suggest the circumstances of future Persian interference in Greece. Greek leaders might have their own reasons to cut deals with Persian officials. The latter have abundant resources and might be willing to spend them to promote their interests as they chafe at the Athenians' presence on the Asiatic coast. This pattern will come to the foreground in Thucydides' book 8. Here we will look at earlier phases of this involvement.

Starting from very beginning of the war, according to Thucydides, both Peloponnesians and Athenians planned diplomatic missions to elicit the king's assistance (2.7.1). The Spartans in particular formulate their policy early on, when Archidamus defensively asserts that, faced with the danger of Athens, the Spartans are justified in attempting 'to acquire allies both Greeks and barbarians' (1.82.1).⁶⁶ In the second year of the war, we learn of a Peloponnesian embassy dispatched to Persia in order to ask for funds.⁶⁷ While on their way to Asia the envoys visit the Thracian king Sitalces, where, however, they are betrayed to some Athenian ambassadors present at Sitalces' court. The Spartans are brought to Athens and summarily put to death (2.67.2–4). Thucydides' narrative emphasizes this Athenian violation of international convention, which shows the fragility of

⁶⁶ Meaning Persians as well as Thracians (see 2.67).

⁶⁷ On Spartan contacts with Persia, cf. Lewis (1977), 61–4, and Brunt (1965), 262–4.

human and divine laws under the pressure of war.⁶⁸ But a secondary theme is the pathetic fate of the Peloponnesian envoys, who, in contrast to their heroic ancestors celebrated by Herodotus, neither reach their destination nor return home.⁶⁹

A missed opportunity to exploit Persian interests in Asia occurs three years later, when the Spartans sail across the Aegean with the intent of aiding the Mytilenean revolt. They are late for that mission, but at Erythrae some Ionians and Lesbians urge them to capture a base and foment a revolt of Ionia, suggesting that Pissouthnes (the governor of Sardis who had supported the Samian rebels) might be persuaded to lend his support. But the plan seems too dangerous to the Spartan admiral Alcidas, who decides instead to return home (3.31).

The third and last Archidamian War episode of Persian involvement belongs to the seventh year (winter of 425/4), when an Athenian commander in Thrace intercepts Artaphernes, a Persian envoy on his way to Sparta.⁷⁰ In Athens they translate the message he is carrying: the king, it said, did not understand what the Lacedaemonians wanted; many ambassadors had come, but they all said something different; if they wished to speak clearly, they should send him other envoys with this Persian (4.50.2). What the Spartans wanted, of course, was Persian money, and they must have been aware that the king expected territorial promises in exchange. But they have been calling themselves the 'liberators of Hellas' and cannot unambiguously offer to barter with Persia the freedom of the Asiatic Greek states, hence the enduring communication gap.⁷¹ The irony is palpable, because traditionally it is the Spartans who are likely to exhibit befuddlement at the diplomatic contortions of foreign envoys that come to them.⁷² Here the Persian king complains—in Assyrian—that the plain-speaking Spartans have not been expressing themselves all that plainly to him.

This passage wraps up Thucydides' view of the role of Persia in the Archidamian War and explains the meaning of his selective

⁶⁸ This episode, which must have shocked contemporaries, also appears in Hdt. 7.137.2–3; see Munson (2001a), 191–3.

⁶⁹ On the 480 BCE mission to Persia of Sperthias and Boulis, the fathers of the two Spartan envoys of 430, see Hdt. 7.133–7.

⁷⁰ Possibly an Achaemenid, perhaps a relation of the two Artaphernes, father and son, in Hdt. 5.25.1, 6.42.2, 7.74.2. Cf. Lewis (1977), 2.

⁷¹ 2.8.4. Cf. Gomme (1956), 499.

⁷² See Hdt. 3.46; cf. 1.152 and Thuc. 1.86.1.

treatment of Persia's negotiation with the Greeks. A scene in Aristophanes' *Acharnians* suggests that the Athenians had had dealings of their own with Persia and that by these negotiations—ineffective enough to become comic material—Athens, like Sparta, hoped to obtain financial support.⁷³ Thucydides records no specific cases of Athenian embassies, except for the Athenian envoys in charge of escorting Artaphernes back to Asia at 4.50.2. These men intend to seek an audience with the king, presumably to counter Spartan diplomacy, but return home after learning of Artaxerxes' death (spring 424).⁷⁴ There is some evidence that the Athenians sent another mission in the following year.⁷⁵ Thus, while probably under-reporting Athenian contacts with Persia in the Archidamian War, Thucydides chooses to single out for attention three incidents involving the Spartans, all ending in failure and pointing to Spartan inadequacy abroad. The Spartans have no coherent international policy likely to motivate the king, they lack the drive to campaign overseas, and they are utterly unable to persuade, communicate, negotiate—or even competently move—on the borders of the Greek world. Persia, as a result, remains on the sidelines of the action until a weakened Athens and a Sparta that lets go of her scruples will turn her into a major player in the Greek war.

VI. ENTER PERSIA

The Artaphernes narrative at 4.50 marks the point at which Thucydides almost entirely stops looking in the direction of Persia as he reports the last years of the Archidamian War and the Peace of Nicias. With his description of the Sicilian Expedition, he is making a different movie, one more than ever informed by the memory of the Persian Wars but oblivious of contemporary Persia.⁷⁶ The Persian gap lasts from 4.50 to 8.5.4 and covers a span of ten years, aside from

⁷³ The *Acharnians* (425 BCE) was produced about one year before Artaphernes of Thuc. 4.50 was brought to Athens. Cf. *Knights* 478, where the Paphlagonian/Cleon accuses his enemies of intrigues with Persia. Cf. Gomme (1956), 499.

⁷⁴ For problems of the chronology, see Lewis (1977), 69–76, and Hornblower (1996), 207–8.

⁷⁵ See Andocides 3.29 and ML 70. Cf. Andrewes (1961), 2–4; Kagan (1974), 306; Lewis (1977), 76–7.

⁷⁶ See above, pp. 243–4.

a brief report at 5.1 that the Delians, whom the Athenians, citing religious concerns, had expelled from Delos, were allowed to settle in Atramyttion by Pharnaces, the governor of Dascyleion.⁷⁷ This notice serves as a 'seed' for a later episode that illustrates one of the themes in book 8, the victimization by both Persians and Greeks of the Greeks living on the Asiatic coast.⁷⁸

In book 8, after her defeat in Sicily, Athens engineers her own recovery and mounts a new force, while in the Eastern Aegean two new parties become ready to take advantage of her weakness with Peloponnesian help: while the Ionians see the opportunity to acquire freedom from Athens, the Persians are eager to resubject the Ionians to their rule. These complementary goals bring together the two Persian strands that emerged separately in the earlier part of Thucydides' work, namely the representation of the real Persia 'now' and the memory of the Persian War past, beginning from the Ionian Revolt of 499.

Thucydides stages the appearance of Persia in his narrative for maximum impact. In contrast with previous (unsuccessful) Spartan missions to Persia (see above, §V), he now reports consecutively two different Persian initiatives to contact the Greeks. First, Chians and Erythraeans arrive in Sparta, taking with them an ambassador from Tissaphernes who invites the Peloponnesians to Asia and promises financial support (τροφήν, 8.5.4–5). At about the same time, Pharnabazus, the son of Pharnaces, Tissaphernes' colleague to the north, sends to Sparta certain Greek exiles living at his court, with the request to bring Peloponnesian ships to the Hellespont. Both satraps hope to obtain a Spartan alliance for the king, in order to induce the cities in their respective provinces to revolt from the Athenians, and thereby regain their tribute (8.6.1).

While Pharnabazus is from a lineage of satraps of Dascyleion familiar to Thucydides' readers,⁷⁹ Tissaphernes, introduced with no patronymic, comes out of the blue.⁸⁰ The appearance of the Persian factor in book 8 is indeed all the more sudden because of

⁷⁷ On the gap, see Andrewes (1961).

⁷⁸ The fate of the Delians of Atramyttion is reported 8.108.4; see below p. 274.

⁷⁹ Above, n. 61.

⁸⁰ He appears here for the first time with no patronymic or introduction. Cf. Westlake (1985), 43. For the possibility that Tissaphernes draws his lineage from one of Herodotus' Hydarnes, see Lewis (1977), 83–4; Hornblower (2008), 765.

Thucydides' choice not to update us on relevant Persian developments that have taken place since the death of Artaxerxes (which he mentioned at 4.50.2), including the revolt of Pissouthnes, the anti-Athenian satrap of Thucydides' earlier accounts.⁸¹ Pissouthnes was defeated and replaced by Tissaphernes, who in fact appears now at 8.5.4 as Darius' 'general of the districts on the coast' (στρατηγὸς . . . τῶν κάτῳ).⁸² Thucydides has also given us no advance notice of a probably connected situation, the still ongoing rebellion in Caria of the son of Pissouthnes, Amorges, whom we find fighting on the Athenian side later on.⁸³ We first hear of the revolt of Amorges in the narrative of the Chian embassy to Sparta, and only indirectly, through Thucydides' report of Tissaphernes' thought. This is not a trivial event, because in addition to his eagerness to recover the tribute from the Greek cities in his province Tissaphernes' desire to capture or kill Amorges is apparently one of the causes for his desire to join the Peloponnesian side in the war (8.5.5).

The paraphrase of the address of Tissaphernes' ambassador to the Spartan assembly (ἐπήγετο . . . ὑπισχνεῖτο) and of his intentions (ἐνόμιζε), which in turn includes references to the king as a constant but distant point of reference (ὑπὸ βασιλέως . . . βασιλεῖ . . . ὥσπερ αὐτῷ προσέταξε βασιλεύς), recalls the calculations Herodotus attributes to Aristagoras on the eve of the Ionian Revolt (Hdt. 5.35.1). Persian focalization has been rare since Thucydides' report of Megabazus' mission, the royal letters in the Pausanias–Themistocles piece, and the letter confiscated from Artaphernes.⁸⁴ The paraphrase is novel because of Thucydides' representation of a Persian agent whose strategy and motives will become the object of scrutiny in an unprecedented way.

But the 'Persia' that plays such an important role in Thucydides' narrative of the Greek War from this point on is not the grand empire Herodotus describes, the multicultural home of distant

⁸¹ See 1.115 and 3.32.1. On the revolt of Pissouthnes, see Ctesias (F 15.53 Lenfant).

⁸² For a discussion about whether Tissaphernes was the territorial satrap of Sardis or held a special western command, see Hornblower (2008), 767–8. Cf. Hyland (2007), 3 and n. 9.

⁸³ 8.5.5; at 8.19.2 both Athenian and Amorges' forces threaten the Peloponnesians at the same time, but only from 8.28.2 and 8.54.3 do we learn that the Athenians are backing him. Cf. Andocides 3.29. The chronology is uncertain; see Andrewes (1961), 4–6; Rood (1998), 153–4; Hornblower (2008), 765 and 769–70, with recent bibliography.

⁸⁴ Cf. 1.109.2; 4.50.2.

capitals, possessing a global policy masterminded by the king. It is rather the peripheral space of its most western provinces, where the king is present only as a removed authority (or potential constraint) in documents and diplomatic discourse.⁸⁵ Similarly, in an earlier passage that testifies to Thucydides' awareness of Persia's role in Athens' ultimate defeat, he speaks neither of Persia, nor of the king as its central executive, but in a more limited way of 'the king's son Cyrus, who provided funds to the Peloponnesian fleet' (2.65.12).

The two satraps of book 8, Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus, have no special cultural trait or perspective. They rather resemble the many scheming Greek individuals with sectarian interests and limited control who proliferate in this part of the narrative. Money—hard cash—becomes a crucial issue. Thucydides does not mention Persian dinners or piles of silver and gold, like Herodotus, or like Thucydides himself in the Pausanias–Themistocles episode and in his description of Odrysian wealth.⁸⁶ The colourful utterance that Alcibiades will attribute to Tissaphernes—that he will not leave the Athenians without pay, 'not even if he had to turn his own bed into silver coin' (8.81.3)—is a deliberately phoney piece of verbal *perserie* by a most unreliable speaker.⁸⁷ For the narrator Thucydides, the Persian satraps are simply pragmatic executives, careful with their investments (the *τροφή* they are ready to pay to the Peloponnesian fleet) and eager to recuperate the revenues (*φόροι*) from the cities in their provinces.

VII. WHAT THE SPARTANS WANT

The narrative that follows the account of the embassies at 8.5–6 raises the problem of the position of the Spartans, who have begun the war as liberators of Greece from Athens (2.8.4), but now become the instruments of the resubjection of Ionia to Persia. The Spartans accept the invitation of the Chians and Tissaphernes (8.6.2),

⁸⁵ See 8.17.4, 8.28.3, 8.37.2 and 4; 8.43.3, 8.46.1, 8.52, 8.56.4, 8.58.2, 8.84.5, 8.87.5. In Thucydides, the only direct contacts between Greeks and the Persian king occur in the Pausanias–Themistocles excursus of book 1: see above, p. 253.

⁸⁶ For Persian symbolic wealth in the Pausanias–Themistocles excursus, see 1.129.3 and above, p. 253; Odrysian wealth: 2.97.3 and p. 245.

⁸⁷ I am borrowing the term *perserie* from Miller (1997). Alcibiades is talking to Athenians who have their own preconceived ideas of how a Persian satrap would talk.

although the prospect of cooperation with Pharnabazus in the Hellespont remains on the table and will be revived periodically.⁸⁸ The evocation of Herodotus' Ionian Revolt—by means of implicit analogies and inversions, and with different individuals sharing this or that role—becomes compelling when the Peloponnesians, led by Chalcideus and Alcibiades (who is the new Aristagoras at this point), bring about the revolt of Miletus while the Athenian fleet takes its station at Lade (8.17.3). Lade is the site of the notorious Ionian defeat in 499,⁸⁹ and to make sure we do not miss the coincidence, Thucydides follows it up with an abrupt prospective announcement of the 'first alliance' between the Spartans and the Persian king (8.17.4).

The way in which Thucydides marks this treaty recalls the sentence with which, after the battle of Lade and the destruction of Miletus, Herodotus underlines the third subjection of Ionia (Hdt. 6.32). This third subjection follows a first and a second subjection by Lydians and Persians, respectively, and just as Herodotus implicitly looks forward to a fourth enslavement of Ionia (the one by Athens, after the Persian Wars), so Thucydides anticipates the second and third treaties between Sparta and Persia (8.36 and 8.57.2), all of which bring about the equivalent of a fifth enslavement, by delivering the Ionians once again into Persian hands.⁹⁰ These agreements confirm the history of Ionian vulnerability, which begins with Herodotus' account of the Mermnad aggressions (Hdt. 1.14–26) and culminates at the end of Herodotus' work with the debate between the Spartans and Athenians about what to do with the Ionians after the Persian Wars, at which time the Spartans propose to move them to Greece or else let them fend for themselves (Hdt. 9.106.2–4). In Thucydides, that history continues with the Ionians' subjection by Athens and with the ambiguous policy of the Spartans in the Archidamian War, by which the 'liberators of Hellas' send embassies

⁸⁸ 8.6.2–5, 8.8.2, 8.39.1, 8.61.1 and 62.1, 8.80.1, 8.99.1.

⁸⁹ For echoes of the Ionian Revolt see Kallet (2001), 95–7 and Hornblower (2008), 800–1.

⁹⁰ The term 'enslavement' borrows from Herodotus' language at 6.32, and is echoed by Thucydides in the indirect speech of Lichas at 8.43.3 (see below, p. 263). See Hornblower (2008), 801. For Herodotus on the conquests of Ionia, see Munson (2007), 146–9. Thucydides also echoes Herodotus' narrative of the defeat at Lade in his sombre reflection on the reversal of fortune of Chios (8.24), which corresponds to Herodotus' lament on Chian sufferings after Lade (Hdt. 6.26–7); see also below, p. 274.

to the Persian king, who therefore (of course) is confused about what they could possibly want (above, §V). Now, during the Ionian phase of the war, the Spartans appear ready to acknowledge in writing that they want to win the war, whatever the cost.

The material support Tissaphernes has promised to the Spartans will consist of payment for the Peloponnesian crews (8.5.5), although the first treaty says nothing on this topic (8.18). The two allies cooperate in the war and the Peloponnesians capture Iasus and Amorges (8.28.3), thus fulfilling one of Tissaphernes' major goals (8.5.5) and a clause of the treaty.⁹¹ But the Peloponnesians are unhappy with the amount of *τροφή* Tissaphernes agrees to pay, and this leads to a second treaty,⁹² which specifies that 'the king shall pay the expenses (*τὴν δαπάνην*) for whatever army is in the territory of the king, if the king has sent for it' (8.37.4). In the midst of the controversy about pay, no voice in the history has yet drawn attention to the amazing clause in the first two treaties, negotiated by commanders in the field, recognizing Persian claims to 'all the territory and cities that belong to the king or once belonged to his ancestors'.⁹³ Only officials who come from Sparta to oversee the conduct of the war raise objections. In a meeting with Tissaphernes at Cnidos their leader, Lichas, complains that

it is terrible if the king claims to hold power even now over all the territories that he and his ancestors ruled in the past: for that entails that all the islands would be back in a state of slavery as well as Thessaly, Locris, and as far as Boeotia, and that instead of giving the Greeks freedom the Lacedaemonians would be imposing on them Median rule. (8.43.3)

Refusing the *τροφή* that comes on these terms, Lichas rejects both of the previous treaties and demands a new one. Tissaphernes storms out in a rage and negotiations break off. The Spartans sail for

⁹¹ See 8.18.3; cf. 8.28.3. On the whole Thucydides suggests that the capture of Amorges was a coup for Tissaphernes and that even from the spoils of Iasus the Peloponnesians did not benefit as much as they could have; cf. Kallet (2001), 252, following Lewis (1977), 91.

⁹² 8.29.1. Thucydides implicitly links the dissatisfaction of some of the Peloponnesian allies at this payment plan (8.29.2) with the revision of their treaty with Persia (8.36.1–2).

⁹³ The two formulae at 8.18.1 and 8.37.2. For other differences in the two treaties' formulation of what rights the king claims over these possessions, see Hornblower (2008), 800–2 and 854–7.

Rhodes, determined to renounce Persian help and collect other funds (8.43.4–44.4).

After waiting so long to have the Spartans introduce the ideological issue of Greek freedom (but after implicitly sounding the alert since the time of the first treaty: see above on 8.17.4), Thucydides' narrative conveys the impossibility that the Spartans can take a principled position and obtain a Persian alliance at the same time. Lichas' protest in fact conflates two overlapping points, one concerning the extent of the country the Spartans give up to the king, and the other about allowing him to enslave again (*πάλιν δουλεύειν*) any Greeks at all. When the Spartans and Tissaphernes patch up their quarrel, they stipulate yet a different treaty, which limits the king's possession to territories in Asia. Lichas' second complaint is thus overruled by the same clause that addresses the first:

All the territory of the king in Asia is the king's: and about his own territory let the king decide as he wishes. (8.58.2)

These terms agree with the position of the Persians in Herodotus, who repeatedly assert that Asia and its inhabitants belong to them.⁹⁴ Thucydides represents the Spartans as conflicted and in denial, but also makes clear what their policy must be as the allies of Persia. At one point the same Lichas who had reaffirmed the liberation principle at Cnidos reminds the Milesians and others in the country of the king that at least until the end of the war they are bound to accept a 'moderate degree of enslavement' (*χρῆναι . . . δουλεύειν . . . τὰ μέτρια*, 8.84.5).

VIII. WHAT TISSAPHERNES WANTS

Tissaphernes' indignant reaction to Lichas (*ἀγανακτῶν*, 8.43.4) is the obverse of Xerxes' rejoicing after reading Pausanias' letter (*Ξέρξης δὲ ἡσθη*, 1.129.1). From this point in the narrative until Tissaphernes' fears (*δεδιώς . . . ἐφοβεῖτο*, 8.57.1) induce him to backtrack and stipulate his third treaty with the Peloponnesians,

⁹⁴ See 1.4.4: *τὴν γὰρ Ἀσίην καὶ τὰ ἐνοικέοντα ἔθνεα βάρβαρα οἰκιοῦνται οἱ Πέρσαι, τὴν δὲ Εὐρώπην καὶ τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ἡγνῆνται κεχωρίσθαι* ('the Persians consider Asia and the foreign people who inhabit it as their own, and they think that Europe and the Greek world is separate'). Cf. 9.116.3.

Thucydides devotes himself to an exploration of the motives of the Persian satrap and of the choices by which he tries to achieve his goal of re-establishing Persian dominion over the Ionian Greeks. We learn at 8.45 that by the time he had walked out of the Spartan meeting (8.43.4), he had already received the visit of Alcibiades, now a fugitive from Sparta and intent on promoting his own interests. Alcibiades becomes Tissaphernes' 'instructor in everything', the designer of his policy and apparently also his agent.⁹⁵ He advises Tissaphernes not to be too much in a hurry to end the war by helping the Peloponnesians, but rather to let the Greeks wear each other out (*αὐτοὺς περὶ ἑαυτοὺς τοὺς Ἕλληνας κατατρῖψαι*, 8.46.2). The Athenians, he says, would make better 'partners of empire', since unlike the Spartans they have no commitment to the freedom of the Greeks. Tissaphernes should therefore wear out both sides (*τρίβειν . . . ἀμφοτέρους*, 8.46.4) and after acquiring as much Athenian territory as possible, expel the Peloponnesians (8.46.1–4).

Like Pausanias and Themistocles in Thucydides and numerous characters in Herodotus, Alcibiades is the typical Greek at an Eastern court making trouble for his fellow Greeks.⁹⁶ It is interesting therefore to find that in treating a Herodotean theme in this passage, Thucydides also borrows again from the style of Ionian *ἱστορίη*, or at least one aspect of it: the reliance on opinion. His purposes here are the historiographic purposes of separating Tissaphernes from Alcibiades, deliberation from advocacy, and what is visible and documented from what is not. The work of the historian appears especially arduous in book 8, which is full of characters who lie. Alcibiades is one of them, hovering over the figure of Tissaphernes, who risks being confused with him. Thucydides reports Alcibiades' advice and actions at great length, but in his attempt to determine the 'real' motivations of a Persian grandee in an unfamiliar setting, he appears to find himself with no reliable source and signals his insecurity by resorting to the Herodotean method of explicit conjecture (8.46.5): Tissaphernes, says Thucydides, 'reasoned for the most part in the same way as Alcibiades (*διενοεῖτο τὸ πλεόν οὕτως*), at least if one were to guess from what he did (*ὅσα γε ἀπὸ τῶν*

⁹⁵ 8.45.1; for the analepsis, see Hornblower (2008), 883–86; Rood (1998), 262–65. His mixed role as adviser and executive is represented by the combination at 8.45. 4–6 of verbs indicating what he said or did vis-à-vis others and verbs indicating what he said to Tissaphernes.

⁹⁶ See above, p. 254 and n. 59.

ποιουμένων ἦν εἰκάσαι).⁹⁷ Tissaphernes heeds Alcibiades' advice first of all by paying the Peloponnesian sailors badly and irregularly. He had followed this practice on his own in the past (8.29), but his purpose this time—suggested by his *didaskalos* Alcibiades—is 'to ruin their mission, causing their ships to lose their fitness'. Also in other respects, Thucydides adds, one could not possibly miss the lack of energy he put into the common war (τά τε ἄλλα καταφανέστερον ἢ ὥστε λανθάνειν οὐ προθύμως, 8.47.5). The end of this sentence underlines again the historian's endeavour to distinguish between the seen (*καταφανέστερον*) and the unseen (*λανθάνειν*), an endeavour that pervades the Persian sections of book 8.

Thucydides indicates Tissaphernes' independence from his Greek adviser by mentioning nothing in this chapter about his reaction to Alcibiades' suggestion to find an accommodation with the Athenians. Things change somewhat only after the quarrel with the Peloponnesians at Cnidos (8.52; cf. 8.43), when Tissaphernes realizes (*ᾗσθητο*) the Spartans' conflicted attitude with regard to the treaty. Lichas' complaint in fact verifies Alcibiades' argument that the Spartans were unlikely to set out to liberate the Greeks from Athens only to enslave them to the Persians. It also perhaps implicitly gives some credit to the other side of Alcibiades' argument, namely that the Athenians, accustomed as they are to holding the Greeks under their rule, would be more willing 'to share their enslavement (*ξυγκαταδουλοῦν*), keeping the sea for themselves and leaving to Tissaphernes the Greeks who inhabit the king's country'.⁹⁸ After Cnidos, therefore, although Tissaphernes is afraid of the Peloponnesians' presence in Asia (*δεδιότα* with the indicative, *παρήσαν*, indicates that the fear is not unjustified), he starts considering Alcibiades' plan, but without great conviction: 'he . . . wanted to be persuaded if he possibly could' (*βουλόμενον δὲ . . . εἰ δύναιτό πως, πεισθῆναι*). This is the closest Tissaphernes comes to agreeing with the idea of an Athenian alliance. Alcibiades' elaborate argumentations are designed to manipulate his internal audiences—

⁹⁷ 8.46.5. The verb *εἰκάζω* in the sense of 'guess' or 'infer' (in contrast to *οἶδα*, 'know': see 6.92.5 and 8.87.2–3) appears again to signal Thucydides' uncertainty about Persian intentions at 8.87.3. See below, p. 270. Of three other occurrences of the verb in metanarrative, two are found in the Archaeology for guesses about the distant past (1.9.4 and 1.10.2) and the third, at 6.60.2, in reference to the mystery of the mutilations of the Herms. For *εἰκάζω* in the sense of compare at 4.36.3, see above, p. 243.

⁹⁸ Cf. 8.52, with a back reference to Alcibiades' words at 8.46.3.

Tissaphernes, the Athenians, and the Spartans (8.83.2, 87.1; cf. 80.1)—as well as his external ones—Thucydides' readers and perhaps Thucydides himself. But Thucydides' narrative makes clear that from Tissaphernes' perspective a deal between Persia and Athens remains unlikely.⁹⁹

Both Tissaphernes' treaties with the Peloponnesians and Alcibiades' negotiations with the Athenians in Tissaphernes' name bargain away the freedom of the Greeks of Asia and cause internal dissent. In Athens the mere prospect of Persian support has disproportionate consequences, persuading the *demos* to give up its rights (8.53, 65–9). The Athenians continue to hope against all hope (8.76) and Alcibiades encourages them by reporting the satrap's alleged assurances in exaggerated orientalizing terms (8.81.3, and see above, p. 261).

Alcibiades' discourse, however, has very little to do with what Tissaphernes really *wants*.¹⁰⁰ The supposed royal *conditio sine qua non* for a Persian alliance, namely a change of government in Athens (8.48.1), is not something Tissaphernes seems to know or care about. When the oligarchs arrive at Sardis to confer on this deal, Alcibiades invents extravagant demands designed to abort the negotiations because he is himself uncertain about Tissaphernes' position. The latter 'feared (*φοβούμενου*) the Peloponnesians more than the Athenians and, moreover, wanted to wear out both sides (*τρίβειν ἀμφοτέρους*), as Alcibiades had instructed him to do' (8.56.2), while Alcibiades wanted to appear (*δοκεῖν*) to the Athenians able to persuade Tissaphernes even if he was not able to do so (56.3). In the midst of this obfuscation, Thucydides once again cannot be sure, but offers his opinion: 'It seems to me (*δοκεῖ δέ μοι*) that Tissaphernes also wanted this result out of fear (*διὰ τὸ δέος*, 8.56.3). He feared (*δεδιώς, ἐφοβείτο*) that without his support the Peloponnesians would be defeated by the Athenians, or that they would defeat the Athenians on their own, or that they would ravage his country in search of sustenance' (8.57.1).

Phrynicus had earlier described Tissaphernes' predicament in similar terms (8.48.2). Thucydides himself elsewhere theorizes that fear is in general a compelling and perfectly rational motive for

⁹⁹ So also Hyland (2007), 8.

¹⁰⁰ The verb *βούλομαι* occurs four times in 8.56.2–3 and another five times in book 8 in reference to Tissaphernes' hidden intentions.

historical action (1.23.6; cf. 1.76.2). In Thucydides' judgement therefore, Tissaphernes' decision to reconcile with the Peloponnesians and stipulate a third treaty was made 'with calculation and foresight of all these factors, according to his intention to equalize the Greek forces on each side' (πάντων οὖν τούτων λογισμῷ καὶ προνοίᾳ, ὥσπερ ἐβούλετο ἐπανισοῦν τοὺς Ἕλληνας πρὸς ἀλλήλους, 8.57.1). λογισμός denotes the careful reasoning that allows for prudent action, advocated by leaders such as Archidamus and Hermocrates (2.11.7 and 6.34.4, 6); πρόνοια, 'foresight', is the primary virtue of a skilful statesman, which Thucydides attributes to Themistocles and Pericles.¹⁰¹ Thucydides' evaluation of Tissaphernes' policy—based on his opinion of the most rational motives for the satrap's uneven behaviour—is somewhat circular, but it represents a remarkable exercise in fairness.¹⁰²

IX. THE PHANTOM FLEET

An index of the historian's difficulties in negotiating Persian appearances and reality is the Phoenician fleet, of whose existence we learn for the first time from the advice of Alcibiades to Tissaphernes to diminish the Peloponnesians' pay and not to bring out the Phoenician fleet he was preparing' (8.46.1). Tissaphernes follows both suggestions, all the time promising to the Peloponnesians 'that the Phoenician fleet will arrive' (8.46.5). The third mention of this fleet occurs again in reported 'speech', this time an official written document. A clause of the Peloponnesians' third treaty with Persia stipulates that Tissaphernes will maintain the Peloponnesian fleet 'until the ships of the king arrive'; after that the Peloponnesians are to provide for their own support and the two fleets will carry on the

¹⁰¹ See 1.138.3 (προεώρα) of Themistocles and 2.65.6 and 5 of Pericles (πρόνοια, προγνούς).

¹⁰² Westlake (1985), 54 seems surprised that Thucydides, influenced by Alcibiades, 'mistook the *oriental wiliness* of Tissaphernes of which he can have had little experience, for the statesmanlike qualities which he so much admired' (emphasis mine). It is true that Thucydides cannot have had direct experience with Tissaphernes, but he makes an honest attempt to evaluate him according to the same standards he applies to Greek politicians, being especially careful to distance himself from the representations of Alcibiades. For the principle that one's opponents will deliberate on the basis of calculations not radically different from one's own, see the words of Archidamus at 1.84.3–4.

war jointly (8.58.5–7).¹⁰³ The clause shows that the Phoenician ships we have only heard about so far, through Alcibiades (8.46.2) and Tissaphernes (8.47.5), are part of the Persian forces under direct command of the king, although they are evidently available to Tissaphernes for his operations in western Asia. Their role as specified in the clause is ambiguous, because they will apparently not (or not only) serve to support the Peloponnesians, but might even replace them, taking over the war. The consequences are potentially disquieting, but remain theoretical because in Thucydides' narrative as we have it the Persian ships will never become part of the action.¹⁰⁴ For the moment they are a pretence:

Tissaphernes prepared to bring the Phoenician ships, as it had been agreed, and to fulfil all the other things which he had promised and which at least (*γοῦν*) he wanted to appear to be preparing. (8.59.1)

The metanarrative intervention *γοῦν* underlines Thucydides' reformulation of the distinction between appearance and reality: here the historical agent 'wanted to appear' (*ἐβούλετο . . . δηλός εἶναι*), while at 8.47.5 his behaviour was 'too apparent' to hide his true intentions (*καταφανέστερον ἢ ὥστε λανθάνειν*).

According to the usual pattern of book 8, the mirage of Persian support not only aggravates the conflict between Peloponnesians and Athenians, but also causes *stasis* within each camp. The Peloponnesian crews are in full protest mode against both Tissaphernes and their own admiral, Astyochus, on the ground that both are 'ruining their mission' by not permitting them to engage the Athenians, leaving them without pay, and making them wait for the Phoenician fleet, 'which in any case was a fleet in name and not in fact' (*ἄλλως ὄνομα καὶ οὐκ ἔργον*, 8.78).¹⁰⁵ The language of this piece, focalized through the Peloponnesian crews, is close to that of Thucydides' account of Tissaphernes' policy (see 8.46.5), except that the Peloponnesians also falsely suspect that Tissaphernes is favouring the Athenians (8.83.2). Alcibiades, as a matter of fact, is assuring the Athenians that Tissaphernes will bring the Phoenician ships, which

¹⁰³ For this treaty, see above, p. 264.

¹⁰⁴ In the Pentecontaetia the Phoenician fleet plays a decisive role against the Athenians in Egypt (1.110.4), but fails to materialize at the time of the revolt of Samos (1.116.3).

¹⁰⁵ The sailors suspect Astyochus of taking bribes from Tissaphernes (8.83.3; cf. 8.45). For internal *stasis* among the Peloponnesians, see 8.78, 80, 83–5.

are already at Aspendus, to them, rather than to the Peloponnesians (8.81.3)—or at least, if not to them, not to the Peloponnesians either (8.88.1). Once again, the reader first learns a crucial fact about these ships—that they are deployed in Aspendus—from a reported speech.

The next passage is unique in Thucydides for the way in which the narrative nucleus (essentially: ‘Tissaphernes went to Aspendus with Lichas, leaving his lieutenant behind, but he did not bring back the ships that were there’) is embedded in metanarrative that reveals speculations, hearsay, and opinion:¹⁰⁶

In the same summer, Tissaphernes at precisely the time when the Peloponnesians were most angry at him for many reasons, but especially on account of the return of Alcibiades, thinking that evidently (*φανερῶς*) he was now on the side of the Athenians, since he wished, as indeed it seemed (*βουλόμενος, ὡς ἐδόκει δῆ*), to clear himself of these charges, prepared to travel to the Phoenician ships at Aspendus and invited Lichas to go with him (8.87.1). He said that he would leave his lieutenant Tamos with the army to give them their pay while he was gone. Accounts differ and it is not easy to know (*λέγεται δὲ οὐ κατὰ ταὐτό οὐδὲ ῥάδιον εἰδέναι*) with what intention (*τίνι γνώμῃ*) he went to Aspendus and, after going, he did not bring back the ships (8.87.2). For it is certain (*σαφές ἐστι*) that the Phoenician ships, one hundred and forty-seven in number, arrived as far as Aspendus, but why they did not come is the object of many inferences (*πολλαχῇ εἰκάζεται*). Some say that he went in order to wear down (*διατρίβῃ*) the Peloponnesian mission just as he had planned (*ὥσπερ καὶ διενόθη*)—in fact Tamos, who had been put in charge, was not, to be sure (*γούνη*), a better paymaster, but rather a worse one; others [say] that he had brought in the Phoenicians in order to exact money from them for their discharge, since he did not intend (*οὐδὲν ἔμελλε*) to use them anyway; others again [say] that he went on account of the accusation against him at Sparta, so that it would be said that he was not doing anything wrong¹⁰⁷ and that he had certainly gone (*σαφῶς οἴχεται*) and the ships were really (*ἀληθῶς*) ready (8.87.3). It seems to me most certain, however (*ἐμοὶ μέντοι δοκεῖ σαφέστατον εἶναι*), that he did not bring back the ships with the aim of wearing down and delaying (*τριβῆς ἕνεκα καὶ ἀνοκωχῆς*) the Greeks, on the one hand by wasting [their resources] (*φθορὰς μὲν*) while he remained lingering over there, and on the other hand by equalizing [their forces] (*ἀνισώσεως δέ*) in order not to make

¹⁰⁶ For a narratological and historical analysis of this passage, see Lateiner (1976).

¹⁰⁷ *ὥς οὐκ ἀδικεῖ* (87.3) answering the Peloponnesian complaints that ‘they were being wronged in every way’ (*πάντα τε ἀδικοῖντο* 99.1).

either side strongest by his support. For, if he had wanted to, he could have finished the war with no ambiguous results really coming out in the open in an unambiguous way (*ἐπιφανείς δήπου οὐκ ἐνδοιαστῶς*). For if he had brought his fleet out he would in all likelihood (*κατὰ τὸ εἰκός*) have given the victory to the Spartans, who even at the present moment were facing the Athenians with a fleet that was more equal than inferior (8.87.4). What convicts him most of all is the ostensible reason (*πρόφασιν*) he gave for not bringing the ships: he said that they were fewer in number than the king had ordered him to collect. But in this case he would rather have received more gratitude, if he had not spent many of the king's resources while achieving the same results (8.87.5). But whatever his intention (*ἥτινιδὴ γνώμη*), Tissaphernes arrived at Aspendus and joined up with the Phoenicians. (8.87.6)

This fleet that never enters the scene of the action, and in this sense never becomes a tangible reality—a fleet that is only a name (*ὄνομα καὶ οὐκ ἔργον*, 8.78) from the point of view of the beleaguered Greeks—embodies the imperfectly known resources of Persia as well as the power and strategy of the distant king, whose orders are again represented (or misrepresented) indirectly through Tissaphernes' speech (8.87.5). Thucydides himself is at a loss, and enumerates only the few positive facts he can count on as certain (*σαφ-*). There were certainly (8.87.3: *σαφές, ἀληθῶς*) 147 Phoenician ships at Aspendus—the precise number suggests the reliability of the information. It is also certain that Tissaphernes went to Aspendus (8.87.1; 2; 3, *σαφῶς οἶχεται*; 6), but (and this is a negative fact, contradicting expectations) he failed to bring back the ships. What is less easy to know for sure (8.87.2 *οὐδὲ ῥάδιον εἰδέναι*) is Tissaphernes' motive for going to Aspendus, and his overall plan with regard to the Greek war (8.87.1, *βουλόμενος*; 87.2, *τίνι γνώμη*; 8.87.3, *διενοήθη, ἔμελλε*; 87.6, *ἥτινιδὴ γνώμη*). Tissaphernes' behaviour creates, or means to create, certain appearances (87.1, *φανερῶς ἤδη ἀττικίζοντι*; 87.2; 87.3, *γούν*), and is explained by him with a pretext (87.5, *πρόφασιν*). His real intentions are at any rate a matter for various speculations (87.3, *πολλαχῇ εἰκάζεται*),¹⁰⁸ opinions (87.1, *ὡς ἔδοκει δῆ*), and reports (87.2, *λέγεται δὲ οὐ κατὰ ταῦτό*; 87.3, *οἱ μὲν ... οἱ δὲ ... ἄλλοι δ'*). All of them are plausible, but the greatest possible certainly resides in the opinion of

¹⁰⁸ The verb *εἰκάζεται* is the same Thucydides had used to infer Tissaphernes' motivations from his actions at 8.46.5: *ὅσα γὰρ ἀπὸ τῶν ποιουμένων ἦν εἰκάσαι*. See above, pp. 265–6 and n. 97.

the *histor* Thucydides (87.4, ἐμοὶ μέντοι δοκεῖ σαφέστατον εἶναι) to the effect that Tissaphernes wanted to wear down both sides in the Greek War, and not simply ruin the Peloponnesian cause,¹⁰⁹ according to Alcibiades' original advice and in agreement with Thucydides' assessment of Tissaphernes' policy earlier on.¹¹⁰

This passage represents Thucydides' most dramatic divergence from the method he had announced in what Hornblower calls the 'haughty' chapter 1.22.¹¹¹ It is Herodotean, although in a very different way than the Pausanias–Themistocles performance of oral tradition and exotic detail.¹¹² It is a cautious piece of analytical reasoning that combines features of Thucydides' style¹¹³ with the method, more typical of Herodotus, of presenting several interpretations of an event, including one preferred by the narrator.¹¹⁴ Thucydides here embraces Herodotus' narratorial stance and makes it his own without irony or mock-competition—in fact with apparent resignation to his coming across as somewhat pedestrian and redundant in a way his predecessor never does.

Thucydides' efforts to be an objective observer become particularly strenuous throughout book 8, where special interests and fragmented actions multiply. The praise of the extreme oligarch Antiphon (8.68), the indictment of the exaggerations of the democrat Chaereas (8.74), the exposure of Alcibiades' lies, coupled with the recognition of his service (8.86.4), the positive judgement on the government of the 5,000 (8.97.2), all these interventions are part of the same balancing act and effort not to be seduced by one

¹⁰⁹ As Lateiner observes (1976), 271, this observation now differentiates Thucydides' opinion from the first report, at 8.87.3. So also Hyland (2007), 11.

¹¹⁰ See 8.56.2 (βουλομένου ... τριβειν ἀμφοτέρους), where Tissaphernes is heeding the advice Alcibiades expressed at 8.46.2 (αὐτοὺς περὶ ἑαυτοὺς τοὺς Ἕλληνας κατατρῦσαι) and 8.46.4 (τριβειν ... ἀμφοτέρους). Alcibiades, according to Thucydides, is among the characters of the history the best informed about what Tissaphernes plans to do, at least in the short range, 'knowing in all likelihood Tissaphernes' intentions, that he was not going to bring the ships' (εἰδώς, ὡς εἰκός, ἐκ πλέονος τὴν Τισσαφέρνους γνώμην, ὅτι οὐκ ἄξειν ἐμελλε, 8.88.1).

¹¹¹ Hornblower (2008), 1005.

¹¹² On Pausanias–Themistocles, see above, §IV.

¹¹³ So the antithesis with *variatio* in the sequence τριβῆς ἔνεκα καὶ ἀνοκωχῆς ... φθορᾶς μὲν ... ἀνισώσεως δέ at 8.87.4 is typically Thucydidean; cf. for example 1.84.4.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Herodotus 6.75.3 and 6.84 (speculation about causes) and 1.86.2 (speculation about motives). For other variant versions in Herodotus, cf. Lateiner (1976), 267–9.

view or the other, as is also the narrator's evaluation of Tissaphernes' rationality in pursuit of his interests (8.57.1; see above, p. 268). Thucydides can report and judge homegrown phenomena with his accustomed authority, just as he can deliver a stunning reconstruction of the *stasis* in Athens or vividly describe the atmosphere of the Athenian fleet at Samos. He is able to give his Greek characters extended speeches, albeit in indirect discourse. But in the case of an unknown power whose actions are visible only on the margins and whose policies are filtered through individuals with personal agendas, the result is a blurry portrayal. Thucydides' objective stance requires a display of subjectivity ('some say . . . others say . . . but from what one can infer . . .') amounting to an admission that he does not really know.

This partial return to Herodotus' historiographic method also happens to coincide with flashing evocations of specific Herodotean passages and scenes. At 8.87.3, the hypothetical gloss 'if he had wanted to . . . he could have finished the war with no ambiguous results . . . if he had brought his fleet out he would in all likelihood have given the victory to the Spartans' corresponds to Herodotus' more passionate extended opinion (*γνώμη*, Hdt. 7.139.1) concerning the Athenians' decisive choice to fight at Salamis: 'If the Athenians had not resisted Xerxes on the sea . . . Hellas would have been conquered' (7.139.2–4).¹¹⁵

It does not bode well for the future that now it is not a Greek city that can determine the success of a war against the Persian king, but a Persian satrap who has the power to decide the outcome of a war between Greeks. When Thucydides records the headquartering of the Athenians at Sestos, 'the town in the Chersonese held by the Medes at an earlier period in this history as the centre for the defence of the Hellespont' (Thuc. 8.62.3), he brings us back to his own *and* to Herodotus' account of the end of the Persian War (Thuc. 1.89.1; Hdt. 9.115–16). The four Athenian ships overtaken by the Peloponnesians off Elaeus, one of which is captured opposite the temple of Protesilaus (8.102.4), reshuffle the terms of Herodotus' Hellespontine chapters, where Protesilaus and his temple establish a

¹¹⁵ There are other hypothetical glosses of interpretation in Thucydides; see e.g. 8.96.4. But 8.87.3 is exceptional for its length and because it is combined with the other metanarrative features we have seen.

connection with the remote past.¹¹⁶ At the end of Thucydides' work, the Greeks living in Asia appear again unprotected from the abuses of all sides. Already the Chians have suffered in an unprecedented way 'since the Persian Wars', this time at the hands of the Athenians.¹¹⁷ Tissaphernes' lieutenant Arsaces oppresses the Antandrians, who chase his garrison from the city (8.108.4). This man, says Thucydides with an analeptic move in the Herodotean manner, had treacherously massacred the Delians who had settled at Atramyttion after the Athenians had expelled them from Delos.¹¹⁸ The episode recalls and inverts the harsh treatment of the Persian Artayktes with which Herodotus ends his narrative of the Persian War (9.121–2).¹¹⁹

X. CONCLUSION

Thucydides' treatment of the Persians is uneven and difficult to summarize in a schematic or global way. We can safely say that he never shows particular interest in, or familiarity with, their culture or the political organization and history of the Persian Empire *per se*; by the same token, he does not play up Persian stereotypes, either, and ('Pausanias–Themistocles' aside) he avoids emphasizing the alterity of the East. He makes us aware of the formative importance of the Persian Wars for the ideology of the Greeks as they embark on their internal conflict, although for most of his history he tends to dismiss Persia as a secondary concern. Separately from the rhetorical exploitation of the Persian War by his historical agents, Thucydides does not fully convey his own appreciation for the moral dimension of that event until his narrative of the Sicilian Expedition. After that, the reappearance on the Greek horizon of the Persian threat (or lifeline, depending on one's viewpoint) brings back images of the contest between Greece and Persia, and particularly of the discouraging struggle for the 'liberation' of the Asiatic Greeks. Here

¹¹⁶ Hdt. 9.116. For Protesilaus in Herodotus, see Boedeker (1988). That Thucydides' mention of the temple of Protesilaus at 8.102.4 represents an allusion to Herodotus is accepted by Hornblower (2008), 1047 following Pelling (2000), 269.

¹¹⁷ 8.24.3, with reference to Hdt. 6.26–7; cf. above, p. 262 and note 90.

¹¹⁸ Thucydides records the expulsion of the Delians at 5.1 See above, pp. 258–9.

¹¹⁹ Hornblower (2008), 1052.

Thucydides is also faced with the task of representing a close-up of contemporary Persians, because Persia is now a protagonist, not merely an object of memory or a sideline player. Does the end of his history amount to an acknowledgement of inadequacy on Thucydides' part?

I have deliberately avoided the various issues concerning the unfinished state of book 8, but I am reminded that many years ago Donald Lateiner (it happens co-editor of this volume, but at the time my teacher at the University of Pennsylvania) gave me a fictional piece he had written ('a *nuga* from 1974, in my romantic phase', according to the dedication),¹²⁰ which represents a tired but still dogged Thucydides in 405, as an exile in Thrace, mulling over the course of the war that he knows Athens can no longer win, and even more depressed about his 'unfinished and unfinishable work', which has fallen so far behind current events. The new role of Persia as arbiter of the Greeks must have been hard for such a man to integrate into his already complex picture. Better to leave the challenge to someone younger and more fit for eastern travels, even if it must be the one whom Lateiner's Thucydides calls 'that idiot Xenophon'.

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¹²⁰ 'The Lion Smiles', unpublished.

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Part III

Reception

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Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, the *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum*, and the Speeches
in Herodotus and Thucydides*

Christopher Pelling

Rhetoric and historiography are cousins. Like orators, historians wrote to persuade; orators included narratives; historians included speeches. It would be odd if the study of rhetoric—even though it is on the whole inevitably fourth-century rhetoric—failed to illuminate Herodotus and Thucydides. This chapter has a narrower focus, concentrating less on the speeches themselves and more on the works of rhetorical theory, the *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* and Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. Exploiting these texts poses particular problems of method, and the first section addresses these. The second and third sections are particular case studies, where I suggest that Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, despite its idiosyncrasies and the time lag, can still provoke lines of inquiry which can be helpful for the criticism of the historians of several generations before.

* An early version of this chapter was given to an Oxford seminar on Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in 1993. At that point the paper included a wrong-headed argument that Thucydides' text was not sufficiently familiar to 4th-cent. audiences for it to be plausible to see *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* as embedding a response. Hornblower (1995) put me right on that; he most civilly granted me anonymity in saying that a particular remark of Gomme 'has to my knowledge led to the misconception that Thucydides virtually disappeared after his own time' (1995: 47). The original paper sat in a drawer from that time until a second outing in London in Dec. 2007. Other parts of it have also figured in discussion (Konstan 2001, 83, and since then Hornblower 2008, 244–5), and I welcome the opportunity that the editors have given me to put this much revised version into the public domain. I am also grateful to the audiences on both airings for helpful debate, and especially to Simon Hornblower, Richard Janko, and Chris Carey.

I. RHETORICA AD ALEXANDRUM AND ALLIANCE SPEECHES

There is nothing new about attempts to link rhetoric and rhetorical theory with Thucydides' speeches in particular (rather less has been done along these lines with Herodotus): the important 1954 essay of Paul Moraux stressed the value of the *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* and of the *Rhetoric* for the criticism of Thucydides' speeches.¹ But the articles of Colin Macleod in the 1970s marked an important new step, as he moved the emphasis to the ways that Thucydides not merely drew on rhetorical practice but also showed how in warfare speech became distorted and perverted.² The surviving examples of real rhetoric and rhetorical theory are weighted towards forensic speech, and it is not surprising that Macleod's approach is most fruitful in treating the Plataean Debate and those parts of Alcibiades' first speech which reply to personal attack:³ these, after all, are closest to forensic realities, even if in each case the forensic elements are tellingly off-key. Particularly in the Plataean case, Macleod brings out how the forensic features point to the circumstances as a travesty of a true trial: time and again the forensic ploys point only to their inadequacy or inappropriateness in a situation where the judgement is already as good as made, and made for reasons other than those of justice. We can be certain that trials were a familiar feature of the fifth-century scene, and tragic parallels suggest that the forensic techniques were not too different in the fifth century from the fourth. For those reasons, Macleod is less cogent in arguing for a similar travesty of dialectic in the Melian Dialogue,⁴ for it is harder to be certain that there was a recognizable 'dialectic' in 416, or even around 400, with norms which were widely accepted in such a way as to enable travesties to be readily detected.

¹ Moraux (1954), taking as his prime example the Mytilenean debate.

² They are conveniently collected in Macleod (1983), chs. 8–13. Cf. Hornblower (1987), 47: 'No one can for the future ignore the relation between Thucydides' speeches and productions of these various types', i.e. 'the practitioners and theoreticians of Greek rhetoric—the authors of tragedy, forensic rhetoric, philosophical dialogues and the rhetorical handbooks of the fourth century'.

³ Macleod (1977 and 1975) = Macleod (1983), chs. 11 and 9.

⁴ Macleod (1974) = (1983), ch. 8. Cf. the criticisms of Bosworth (1993), 38 = Rusten (2009), 326.

That question, however, already points to an evident difficulty of method in using the rhetorical evidence to elucidate Herodotus and Thucydides, the possibility that intellectual or rhetorical habits changed over a century; for we have few examples of fifth- and early fourth-century rhetoric which we can assume to pre-date Thucydides, let alone Herodotus. We can normally do something to counter that problem, for instance by comparing the fourth-century evidence with whatever other fifth-century evidence we have, typically tragedy and comedy; in this chapter we will find some cases where it is fruitful to exploit that sort of control. But of course that is always delicate, as we are so rarely comparing like with like. The tragedians and comedians are producing their own version of rhetorical reality, and it is extremely unlikely that those versions will be straightforward reproductions of everyday rhetoric—even more unlikely than it is that Herodotus or Thucydides themselves are producing a straightforward reproduction of real-life speeches. Still, there is often something to be done along those lines.

With the works of rhetorical theory, a second methodological problem is the danger that Aristotle (in particular) may be an inaccurate guide to rhetorical reality—or indeed to the emotions which book 2 analyses, often so curiously. Aristotle has his own agenda, and the shifts between ‘is’ and ‘ought’, between unease at the orator’s task of playing on the emotions and practical advice on how to do it—these make the *Rhetoric* a very delicate text to exploit. Those ‘cf. Arist. *Rhet.*’ references usually beg a few questions, and in every case we need to analyse the Aristotelian context and the run of his argument before regarding the parallels or contrasts as secure. Perhaps the fourth-century *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* furnishes a more secure guide to rhetorical reality, but there too analysis of the work’s presentational strategy is helpful. There may be some parallel unease between ‘is’ and ‘ought’ in that text, but if so the unease seems to be going in a different direction, with a heavy contamination of the advice (the ‘ought’) from the realities of what orators in fact do. That enhances rather than reduces the value of that work for present purposes.

The third methodological problem is the one to address first, the one raised by Simon Hornblower (1987: 47–50).⁵ For e.g. *Rhetorica*

⁵ Cf. Hornblower (1991), 75–6; (1996), 83–4, 171; and (2008), 244–5. The argument is not accepted by Heath (1990), 396–7 n. 21, and qualifications are also expressed by Rutherford (1994), 59 n. 26.

ad Alexandrum (henceforth *RaA*) to be useful for illuminating Thucydides, we have to assume that it reflects some rhetorical realities that are independent of Thucydides himself; but can we be sure that *RaA* is not itself *influenced* by Thucydides? Perhaps its models for rhetoric are themselves borrowed from the example Thucydides has set: in which case, as Hornblower says, this might stultify the whole procedure. Hornblower's example is 'how to argue for peace' (*RaA* 1425a28–b16): sensible people who are winning should not wait till their fortunes change, but should quit while they are ahead; war is an incalculable thing; many have been ruined by excessive hopes; peace allows the victors to enjoy the fruits of their victory. That is indeed close to the Spartans' speech at Thuc. 4.17–20: too close, Hornblower understandably thinks, for comfort.

Hornblower is right to draw attention to this logical possibility, and he was certainly right to insist that it was perfectly likely that the author of *RaA* knew Thucydides.⁶ Still, other examples from *RaA* do not seem quite so susceptible to interpreting in the Hornblower way, even ones which are quite illuminating for Thucydides. The suggestions of *RaA* (and the rhetorical parallels in general) are at their richest when Thucydides' speakers *do not* quite fit; it is not the closeness, which might be explicable in terms of Thucydidean influence, but the differences, often very subtle ones, which tell us most about Thucydides' distinctive technique.⁷ This indeed amounts to an interpretative principle, one which goes some way to meeting Hornblower's caution: we should feel more confident in drawing inferences from the differences than from the similarities.

Let us take an instance that Macleod quoted to illuminate Thucydides, namely *RaA*'s advice on how to argue for an alliance (1424b27–25a8).⁸ The following is particularly reminiscent of Thucydides:

When one wishes to support the formation of an alliance it is necessary to show that the situation is appropriate, and to prove if possible that the contracting nation is reliable (*δικαίους*) in character, and has done

⁶ Hornblower (1995) makes this clear: see note on p. 281, above.

⁷ As well as the cases discussed in the text, note Macleod (1975), 43 = (1983), 71, contrasting Alcibiades' 'aggressive and entirely unapologetic tone' at 6.16 with the advice given at *RaA* 1437a1–b15, and (1975), 64 n. 18 = (1983), 76 n. 4 on the contrast between *RaA*'s stress on 'divine goodwill' and the themes preferred by Thucydides' Pericles.

⁸ e.g. Macleod (1978), 64 = (1983), 88; (1975), 39 = (1983), 68.

the state some service previously, and is very powerful and a near neighbour, or failing this, you must collect together whichever of these advantages do exist. (*RaA* 1424b32–42, trans. Rackham, Loeb edn.)

In Thucydides one thinks particularly of the Corcyraean debate in book 1, of the Mytileneans' speech at Olympia at the beginning of book 3, and of the debate at Camarina in book 6.⁹ Thus the Corcyraeans comment that they would have liked to be able to mention some previous benefit (*euergesia*) that they had conferred, and they justify their claim to be just (*dikaioi*), albeit a little perfunctorily (1.32.1, 34.1–3); the Mytileneans have their 'whoever thinks Lesbos is a long way away (*μακρὰν ἀπεῖναι*) will find that the good it can do you is very close at hand' argument at 3.13.5; and so on. This could again raise the same set of alternatives: is *RaA* following Thucydides, or is Thucydides adopting and adapting rhetorical schemata which *RaA* then reflects in a more straightforward way?

In this case the second alternative seems decidedly preferable. If one were producing an *RaA* schema on the basis of these Thucydidean speeches, despite all the similarities one would not have come up precisely with this. One would have more emphasis on the 'opportunity' (*kairos*), an aspect that *RaA* dismisses rather quickly; there would have been more stress on Thucydides-like arguments such as 'this is too good an opportunity to miss', or 'this touches the city's interests most directly', or 'think of the dangers if you do not contract this alliance' (a characteristic Thucydidean emphasis on fear: *RaA* is stronger on reasons for hopefulness than on the necessities to fight); and the point in *RaA* on geographical proximity (*πλησίον τοῖς τόποις*) is interesting, for in none of the three cases does this quite fit, and in each case this is replaced by that 'it closely touches the city's interests' point. That, as we saw, was made explicit in the Mytilenean case, but is implicit in the others as well; we shall see more of this when we turn to Camarina. Similarly, in none of the three cases is there a strong prior benefit (*euergesia*) to refer to, and again this is made explicit in one case, this time the Corcyraean. If *RaA* is building on Thucydides, then, we should have to assume that it was inferring regular expectations from these exceptional cases where the speakers acknowledge or imply that they cannot fulfil those expectations: that is not impossible, but it does seem easier to

⁹ Thuc. 1.31–44, 3.9–14, 6.75–88.

assume that *RaA* and Thucydides are both building on a conventional expectation than that *RaA* is working particularly hard with Thucydides. If *RaA* is operating both with Thucydides and with other speeches, then the picture is both more plausible and more complex—but that would tend to complicate rather than stultify the value of *RaA* for Thucydidean criticism. Once again, the principle of using *RaA* more for the differences rather than the similarities makes the procedure safer.

It becomes more likely that Thucydides and *RaA* are both feeding off conventional expectations if we look at Herodotus as well; for he too has pleas for alliances, and they tend to confirm that we are not just retrojecting fourth-century expectations. Aristagoras' pleas at 5.49 are most interesting, and so is the appeal to Gelon at 7.157;¹⁰ both fit the *RaA* rubrics pretty well as closely as the Thucydidean examples, but again there are variations according to the circumstances, sufficient to make it difficult to believe that *RaA* is simply drawing inferences from the historiographic material. Thus, instead of the 'show that the people are *dikaioi*', in each Herodotean case we find a stress on the 'justice' (or some other moral argument) of the claim: it is shameful for Greeks to allow fellow Greeks to be enslaved (5.49.2–3, 7.157.1–2). The absence of any prior good turns is the point which Gelon forcefully deploys against the Greek ambassadors, 7.158.1–2 (below, p. 304); and the 'near-at-hand' point is particularly telling in the Aristagoras case, with his elaborate details on the distances from the coast ('straight after X you come to Y'), using these to stress how easy it might be to 'rule the whole of Asia' (5.49.8). For Aristagoras that goes with his emphasis on the feebleness of the Asiatic opposition (5.49.3), a version of *RaA*'s demand for an emphasis on the alliance's potential strength. This stress on distances memorably proves his comeuppance with Cleomenes, who asks 'how far is it to get to the king?' (5.50.1). But Cleomenes' question, like Gelon's reproach, confirms that nearness and past services were indeed crucial questions when alliances came under discussion, and that in its turn suggests that *RaA* is accurately reflecting a long-standing tradition. Tragedy is here less productive, because it talks less about alliances: but the justice of the contracting parties and the

¹⁰ I discuss Aristagoras' rhetoric in detail in Pelling (2007), and touch on the Gelon incident in Pelling (2006a), 89–92; on Gelon see also below, pp. 304–5.

mutual benefits that cement it are the stuff of the *Eumenides*.¹¹ There is also a wider sense in which Athenian generosity to the weak and exploited—their sense of ‘justice’—provide mythical archetypes for contemporary friendships, or more usually what ought to be contemporary friendships but often are not, always owing to the other city’s fault.¹²

If we are right to see *RaA* as reflecting what were already fifth-century expectations, the relevance to the Camarina speeches becomes most interesting, for that is a most freakish way of asking for an alliance, or more precisely asking for a pre-existing alliance to become more operative.¹³ (That again makes it difficult to assume that *RaA* is inferring regular practice from an elaborate freak.) Take the *RaA* demand to ‘show that the potential allies are near neighbours’. This is something which the Syracusan Hermocrates can fulfil, and he does (‘you are our neighbours’, *ὁμόρους ὄντας*, 6.78.4). But on the Athenian side Euphemus seems to feel a need to show the exact opposite, ‘that we are far away’ (6.86.3), and that you, the people of Camarina, are near the enemy’: this is paradoxically made to suggest that they have less to fear from this alliance because they are so important to the Athenians who will need to retain their goodwill, and that they have more to fear from the enemy who ‘live close to you and are always plotting against you’ (*ἐπιοικούντες ὑμῶν αἰεὶ τε ἐπιβουλεύουσι* . . . , 6.86.3). Fear of the potential ally is coming to be as important as fear from the enemy. Similarly, the ‘show that the potential ally is powerful’ gives way to a ‘show that we, the potential ally, are too weak to dominate’ (and an acknowledgement that Camarina is powerful too, 6.84.1, which again suggests

¹¹ Esp. Aesch. *Eum.* 290–1, promising Argos and its people as *πιστὸν δικαίως ἔς τὸ πᾶν τε σύμμαχον* (‘as allies in righteous fidelity for ever’, trans. Sommerstein, Loeb edn.); 669–72; 762–77. Elsewhere pleas for support tend to be made by the weak to the strong, and hence *RaA*-type arguments are less to be expected; but note the importance of justice to an alliance at Aesch. *Supp.* 343–4 and 395; the herald’s words on justice, on the absence of direct interest and on the weakness of the potential ally, then Iolaus’ contrasting emphasis on past services at Eur. *Hcl.* 134–6, 162–9 and 215–20; and Theseus’ point that one should seek alliances with the flourishing rather than the unjust (Eur. *Supp.* 223–5). In *Supplices* that prudence is soon trumped by Athens’ characteristic pity and mercifulness (below, pp. 290–1), but still reflects what might be expected among the harder-headed.

¹² Euripides’ *Heraclidae* and *Supplices* and Sophocles’ *Oedipus Coloneus* are especially relevant here.

¹³ On this important historical point see Hornblower (2008), 429–32 and 490–1, emphasizing that Thucydides himself does not make this as clear as he might.

they have less to fear from this potential new ally). Like the Leontinians, it simply makes good sense for Athens to strengthen those who are *their enemies'* neighbours (*ὄμοιοι*, 6.84.2) in order to frighten *them* (6.85.3): so it is the closeness of the enemy, not of the ally, that is made to be the crucial point. It is a very off-key version of those *RaA* demands, and most expressively so: it is all so expressive of the 'fear' which is coming to dominate everywhere, just as Euphemus acknowledges that it dominates Athenian policy (6.83.4)—and in particular, Camarinaean fear of the new and massive aggressor, Athens herself.

We can compare Hermocrates' speech too. He has to handle a similar alertness to, and fear of, his own city's power, especially in 6.78; but he eventually projects that power by way of threat, especially in his last chapter. His use of the 'near at hand' motif begins by seeming close to *RaA* expectations, for at 6.78.4 his emphasis on Camarina and Syracuse as 'neighbours' is used to suggest that they belong together.¹⁴ Yet it too soon becomes off-key, for its emphasis quickly falls on the way that they have more to fear by having Syracuse as an enemy rather than a friend. Relevant too is the speech of Alcibiades at Sparta that immediately follows, for that provides some further distorted versions of the expected line: in particular, he stresses Sicily's weakness rather than her strength (6.91.2), drawing out the implication that the Spartans will soon find their own danger all too 'near at hand' unless they act now (6.91.3–4). So all these three speeches are eloquent, above all, of fear rather than hope, and the subtle manipulation of rhetorical expectations emphasizes the point. An audience with *RaA*-like expectations will pick up the points more astutely, and *RaA* is therefore proving genuinely useful for the criticism of the speeches, again for what does not fit rather than for what does. But one can only use this evidence because, first, we are building on differences rather than similarities; and, secondly, because the *RaA* expectations receive independent confirmation from texts nearer Thucydides' day, from Herodotus, from tragedy, and in a sense even from Thucydides himself, from those two passages in the Corcyraean debate and the Mytileneans' speech where the speakers imply a prior expectation of an argument which, as it happens, they cannot produce.

¹⁴ Cf. Hornblower (2008) on 6.76.1 and 78.4; Scardino (2007), 577. More on Hermocrates below, pp. 310–11.

That emphasis on fear also fits a further point: the way in which these speeches cohere with the narrative in reproducing that atmosphere of fearfulness, the fear of the audience which each speaker so eloquently plays to and plays on. In terms of Thucydidean interpretation, that may suggest an implication that Athens might have done better if it had gone in smaller, less terrifying numbers; they might have found it easier to gain alliances within Sicily itself, or at least not have found their previous allies so apprehensive of their mighty presence.¹⁵ And in terms of rhetorical technique, this also fits Aristotle's demand in the *Rhetoric* that speakers adapt their speeches to the psychology of the audience.

II. ARISTOTLE AND PITY

Several of these points—the need to control fourth-century evidence by checking it against fifth-century sources, the greater insight to be drawn from mismatches than from similarities—are also relevant as we turn to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. Let us start with Aristotle's treatment of a particular emotion, pity, which has been the subject of interesting recent debate in and after David Konstan's *Pity Transformed*.¹⁶ Can Aristotle here be brought into contact with, in particular, Thucydides' Mytilenean Debate,¹⁷ where pity notoriously plays only a small role in the argumentation?

First, Aristotle's treatment: the crucial section is 2.8, and the distinctive aspects are caught by the initial topic sentence:

Let pity then be a certain pain occasioned by the appearance of a destructive or painful evil that occurs to one who does not deserve it, in

¹⁵ Their cool reception is most striking in the case of Rhegium, 6.44.3, 46.2: cf. then Messana (6.50.1) and Camarina itself (6.52.1), with Hornblower's (2008) introductory n. to 6.62–71 and on 6.86.2.

¹⁶ Konstan (2001). Konstan's analysis underlies many of the discussions in Sternberg's collection (2005a); Lateiner's study (2005) in that volume of Herodotus and Thucydides is particularly useful for the present purpose. Sternberg (2006) also has much of interest in her comparison of tragic and non-tragic texts. In my own contribution to Sternberg's collection (Pelling 2005) I make some mild criticisms of Konstan's analysis, but they are not relevant here.

¹⁷ Herodotus is surprisingly unhelpful here as a *comparandum*: Lateiner (2005), 74–80 notes that there is less pity in Herodotus than one would expect. When it is there, it tends to end badly for the pitier (2005: 80).

cases where the pitier would think that this might also happen to himself or to one of his own, and where this should seem near at hand. For it is clear that the man who is to have pity must think that he is the sort of person who might suffer something bad, either himself or one of his own, and an evil of such a kind as given in the definition or similar or equivalent. (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 2.8.2 = 1385b)

And the rest of the section elaborates these points. It emerges that the job of the orator will be to make the suffering seem as near as possible to the potential pitier: at 2.8.14 he acknowledges that those who soup up pity by their skilled delivery (*ὑπόκρισις*) do serve some useful rhetorical purpose, because they make it seem more immediate. But he does not develop that here, perhaps because of the characteristic unease at dealing with such emotional ploys,¹⁸ perhaps simply because he is delaying such topics to book 3. The two striking points about the emotion itself are both explicitly re-emphasized in what follows: that pity has a self-directed element, its 'it could happen to me' aspect; and that pity only goes to those who do not deserve their punishment or fate. It is thus natural that the next section goes on to debate 'indignation' (*νεμεσᾶν*) as a sort of 'antithesis' (*ἀντικείμεναι*, 2.9.1) or counter to pity: the stimulation of righteous indignation at what someone has done will be the natural way of deflecting the pity which an audience or jury might otherwise feel.

Aristotle is anything but a straightforward guide to the moral values of his own day, still less to those of a century earlier. His analysis of 'how pity works' may be filtered both through his perception of how it *should* (rationally) work, with 'ought' infecting 'is' (above, p. 283); it is also affected by his concern to give practical advice, and of course orators will concentrate on desert, for instance, in trying to evoke or deflect pity. There is certainly good reason to doubt whether pity is really so limited to those who suffered unjustly, both in oratory¹⁹ and in tragedy. The whole point of Euripides' *Suppliants* is the pity felt by Alcmena and then Theseus for the Argives even though, it is several times brought out, they deserved their fate: that is complicated by the respect due to suppliants, but the emotions

¹⁸ On this cf. Trevett (1996), 378–9.

¹⁹ Cf. Dover (1974), 198–9; Sternberg (2005b), 21–2; Tzanetou (2005), 102.

are traced and stressed in very pity-based terms.²⁰ And in a way even the Mytilenean sequence confirms this, for if we take speech and narrative setting together (as we must²¹) we see many hints of those humanitarian feelings, however badly the Mytileneans had behaved: the Athenians thought that their initial decision had been *ὠμὸν . . . καὶ μέγα . . .*, *πόλιν ὅλην διαφθεῖραι μᾶλλον ἢ οὐ τοὺς αἰτίους* ('a savage and excessive decision to destroy a whole city rather than just the guilty' [tr. Hammond, Oxford World's Classics edn.], 3.36.4); the ship was sailing slowly *ἐπὶ πρᾶγμα ἀλλόκοτον* ('on its horrible mission' [Hammond], 3.49.4); Cleon himself clearly thinks that pity is one of the sentiments he needs to argue against, and that is why he says so much about it.

One can still find the run of Aristotle's argument valuable in explaining Cleon's choice of arguments. In particular we might note that juxtaposition with 'indignation': at 2.2 Aristotle has made it plain that anger too (*ὀργή*) is very self-directed, anger at what one has had done to oneself. Anger naturally aims at revenge, and an important element in it is the feeling one has been slighted (*ὀλιγωρία*) or outraged (*ὕβριζεν*) and one wants vengeance (*τιμωρία*); one is angrier with one's friends when they treat one badly than with one's enemies; or with people who do not reciprocate kindnesses, and so on (2.2 = 1378a–80a). All this has very much the flavour of the arguments that Cleon uses to deflect pity; the symmetry between anger and pity—both having a self-directed element, concentrating on what has happened to oneself or what might happen to oneself, anger concentrating on the injustices done by the person and pity on the undeserved injustices done to the person—makes this rhetorical strategy as effective as it can be, as Cleon strives to reawaken the 'anger' of the previous day (3.36.2, cf. now 38.1). If the Mytileneans were the sufferers of injustice they might deserve pity, but if they were the unjust ones they deserve anger; one can parallel that move in many real forensic speeches.

There is more to say about this self-directed element of pity, the 'it-could-happen-to-me'. Here too there may be more to it than

²⁰ Deserving their fate: Eur. *Supp.* 219–37, 250–1, 334–6, 505, 737–49. Pity-based terms: 34, 168–70, 194, 280–1. Much of that pity is directed towards the mothers of the dead, who could be thought to be 'undeserving' of their misery; but the guilty Adrastus too can appeal for pity for himself (168).

²¹ On this fundamental principle see Pelling (2000), 121–2 = Rusten (2009), 185–7.

Aristotle allows; the gods for instance can be called on to feel pity, even though they are pre-eminently beings who could not feel 'it could happen to them'.²² There is still something here that both Herodotus and tragedy confirm. Take Cyrus' second thoughts about Croesus on the pyre:

When the interpreters told Cyrus what Croesus had said, he began to think differently. He reflected that he too was a mortal man, and was burning alive another who had once been no less prosperous than himself. The thought of that, and the fear of retribution, and the realization of the instability of the human condition, made him give orders that the flames should at once be put out, and Croesus brought down from the pyre along with those with him. (Herodotus 1.86.6)

Or the words of Odysseus to Athena in the first scene of *Ajax*:

I know of no one [who was as accomplished as he]; I pity him, wretched as he is, even though he is my enemy, for he is yoked together with terrible, destructive madness (*ate*). And in this I am not considering his lot any more than my own: for I see that we all are nothing more than phantoms or an empty shadow, all of us who are alive. (Sophocles, *Ajax* 121–6)

And there are other passages too.²³ We need not doubt that, as with several other humanitarian emotions, 'it could happen to me' was a more substantial ingredient than we naturally assume today: it was a feeling of reciprocity—the tables might be turned on me. No wonder 'pity' and 'fear' hunt so closely together in the *Poetics* (1449b27, 1452b1, 1452b27–53a7).

This too has some application to the Mytilenean debate. Consider Cleon as he builds to his peroration at 3.40.3. He is arguing that the three things most opposed to a city's interests are the paradoxical combination of pity, delight in words, and reasonableness (*οἶκτος* or *ἔλεος*, *ῥηδονή λόγων*, and *ἐπιείκεια*): there is a lot to say about that linkage, especially the sandwiching of reasonableness (*ἐπιείκεια*), normally an unequivocally good quality, with two qualities whose

²² Of course the gods often choose not to pity (Konstan 2001, ch. 4), but it is not a logical absurdity to think that they might, as Nicias feels they might at Thuc. 7.77.4. True, the gods can feel 'it could happen', or indeed 'is happening', 'to someone close to me' or (in those terms of *Rhetoric* 2.8.2) 'one of their own', and those are the situations in which they most often do feel pity; but they are not the only cases. Eur. *Electra* 1329–30 has gods feeling pity for all suffering humanity.

²³ See the interesting discussion of Konstan (2001), ch. 2 and (on the Aristotelian material) pp. 128–36.

beneficial aspects are always disputable.²⁴ Here, though, it is more relevant to see what he says about pity in particular:

Pity is properly (δίκαιος) reserved as a mutual obligation between people like ourselves (τοὺς ὁμοίους), not for those who will show no pity in return and are necessarily in a state of constant hostility. The politicians who delight us with their arguments can still play their games over matters of less importance, but must not be allowed to do so on an issue which will cost the city dear for the cheap pleasure of listening to them, while they themselves take a fancy reward for a fancy speech. And reasonableness (ἐπιείκεια) is the way to treat those who will become and remain our friends, not those who will stay as they were (τοὺς ὁμοίους), just as much our enemies as before. (Thucydides 3.40.3, trans. Hammond [mildly adapted].)

Pity should be given, then, to people ‘like ourselves’, τοὺς ὁμοίους. The older commentators debate whether this means ‘people of similar status’ (Classen and Steup) or ‘like-minded people’ (Gomme in Gomme et al. 1945–81).²⁵ Either way, this could be taken as a sort of cruder equivalent of Aristotle’s insistence on the ‘it could happen to me’ element. There is indeed a lot of reciprocity in this passage, ἀντιδίδοσθαι (‘give in return’, rendered by Hammond as ‘a mutual obligation’), ἀντοικτιοῦντας (‘show pity in return’), ἀντιλήφονται (the ‘fancy reward for a fancy speech’ that the politicians are angling for); and it will be reciprocity that Cleon calls for in the end, but in violence rather than pity (ἀνταπόδοτε, 40.7).²⁶ But Aristotle—like Sophocles’ Odysseus or Herodotus’ Cyrus—is implying a deeper view of the shared vulnerability of the human condition: anyone can fall, for that is the human lot. Cleon has moved into a quite different register, one more of Realpolitik. ὁμοίους here certainly does not

²⁴ Cf. Macleod (1978), 72 = (1983), 96. Hornblower (1991), 423 (citing Winnington-Ingram 1965, 75) and Gomme in Gomme et al. (1945–81), ii. 309) find the inclusion of ‘pleasure in words’ the intrusive element in the three. ‘Pity and humanity are virtues recognized by all’ (Gomme): that is rather too simple, perhaps, in terms of Greek pity. Moraux (1954), 14 relates Cleon’s technique here to the recommendations of *RaA* 1439b–40a and 1442b–3a.

²⁵ Hammond in fact has ‘people of like mind’: I have adapted the translation at that point to avoid prejudging the issue. Lattimore has ‘one’s own kind’, Warner ‘people who are like ourselves’.

²⁶ ‘... which means “give them what they would have given you”’, Gomme. Not quite: they were the ones who started it, and the ‘it’ they started was a chain of ἀδικία (προϋπάρξαντας ἀδικίας, 40.5). So, whether or not we press the implication that the response may also be ἄδικον, the retaliation is justified in terms of what they have done already, not what they would have done.

mean ‘mortals like yourself’, people who jointly experience the human condition; morality, for him, only works between ‘equals’ in a more hard-headed sense, and pity only extends to those people who might be able to pity you in return. This reciprocity is much cruder. It is no longer that you yourself might be pitiable in turn, it is simply whether there is a chance of reciprocity from these particular people, as if Odysseus were to say ‘still, never mind, Ajax will never pity me back’.²⁷ For Cleon, the strand has become a mask for bullying those who are not your equals, and he assumes a similar lack of generosity on the other side. The close linkage (οὔτε ... τε ...) of οὔτε ἀντοικτιούντας ἐξ ἀνάγκης τε καθεστῶτας ἀεὶ πολεμίους is doubtless expressive (‘those who will show no pity in return and are necessarily in a state of constant hostility’): their natural enmity *explains* why they would feel no pity. Hence that debate between Classen/Steup and Gomme may be misconceived: ὁμοίους can mean both ‘of equal status’ and ‘like-minded’, because in Cleon’s assumption the equal status is a prerequisite for being like-minded.²⁸

Language is put under strain in such cases, and there is an even greater strain in the way Cleon talks about the *dikaion* in his closing remarks, divorcing it from words with which it would normally cluster closely—ἐπιείκεια (‘reasonableness’, or as Gomme preferred ‘fair-mindedness’), τὸ προσήκον (‘what is fitting’), τὸ εἰκός (‘what one should expect’, or Gomme’s ‘equity’)—and assimilating it much more closely to the *xumphereon*. Cleon remains concerned with justice, but this does fit in with a wider rhythm of the history, whereby we trace, and are led to understand, a gradual drift away from *dikaion* arguments: more on this in the final section of this chapter. If this is what *dikaion* is coming to mean, then it is not surprising that there is little room for it to supplement arguments

²⁷ In the case of Herodotus’ Cyrus there *may* be a more Cleon-like point, as one of the elements he fears is vengeance, τὴν τίσιν. But (a) this is only one element among several, and (b) it is anyway left unclear whether such ‘vengeance’ would be wrought by the humans who are now his victims (not Croesus himself, of course, but his Lydians) or by the gods. More on this at Pelling (2006c), 159–60.

²⁸ The further play with ὁμοίους at the end of the extract is more enigmatic, and Gomme prefers to follow the *recentiores* in reading ὁμοίως. But there too, whichever reading we prefer, the possibility of the enemy changing *their* views in such a way as to bring benefit to the Athenians is all that matters. ὁμοῖοι in one sense are at least potentially appropriate for one humane sentiment, because they might reciprocate; but in the real world these enemies are ὁμοῖοι in another sense, people who will remain as they are now (‘stay as they were’, Hammond), and hence—so Cleon argues—humanity is wasted on them.

from expediency. And there is also that expressive shift in the usual connotation of 'pity': its self-direction is coming to be prudent in a different sense, and hard calculations of potential advantage are coming to dominate even here.

Something very similar seems to be going on at the beginning of the Melian Dialogue. The Melians have just been advised to concentrate on expediency arguments:

MELIANS: To our way of thinking, at any rate, there is advantage (and we must speak of advantage, since you have put justice to one side and made expediency the basis of discussion)—there is advantage in your preserving the principle of the common good: that is, that anyone who finds himself in danger should receive fair and equitable treatment (τὰ εἰκότα καὶ δίκαια), and be able to improve his position if he can make a strong case for something less than the full rigour of what could happen to him. This principle is proportionately in your interest much more than ours, given the massive retaliation you would face as an example to others should you fall from power. (Thucydides 5.90, trans. Hammond)

Once again, we see the self-directed aspect: 'it might happen to you'. But once again there is an eloquent difference from the self-directed aspects of pity, as Aristotle defined it and as we see it in Herodotus and tragedy. This is where we *expect* an appeal to pity, and that is what Macleod, for instance, supposes the Melians are doing here; elsewhere in his discussion he talks of their 'reliance on conventional morality'.²⁹ Yet this at least is not conventional morality, but an interesting adaptation of it. Macleod compares *Hecuba* 282–5, Hecuba's plea to Odysseus:

Rulers must not exercise their rule improperly, nor should they think that their prosperity will last for ever: I was prosperous once, but no more; one day took away all my wealth. (Euripides, *Hecuba* 282–5)

But there is a difference here. The Melians are talking about a pattern that the Athenians should not be the first to break, because this may not be in their interest when the empire falls, whereas Hecuba is more traditional, talking of herself already as the *exemplum* of human vulnerability that she will later become. Odysseus should look at her and understand something of his own human condition, and that is what should stimulate his pity: he should realize that the

²⁹ Macleod (1974), 391–2 = (1983), 391–2; also (1983), 155–6, where he develops the comparison with *Hecuba*. 'Conventional morality': (1974), 391 = (1983), 56, referring in the first instance to what the Athenians rebut at 5.105.

same could happen to him, but there is no suggestion that his treatment of Hecuba makes it *more* likely to happen to him. The Melians make the harder political point that the Athenians may suffer by their action, because it will make others more likely to follow their example once the tables are turned and they become the victims. By now such arguments *have* to move into a sharper *xumpheron*-focus if they are to have a chance of success.

That emphasis on the *xumpheron* is most disquieting to a modern reader. It is to this that we now turn.

III. THE EXPEDIENT AND THE JUST

The polarity of the expedient, *sumpheron* or *xumpheron*, and the just, *dikaion*, is evidently of interest in both Thucydides and Aristotle, and both authors seem to concentrate on the *sumpheron* to an extent which many modern readers find uncomfortable.³⁰ As is well known, Aristotle counts the *sumpheron* as the defining aim of symbouleutic, as *dikaion* is that of forensic and *kalon* ('honourable') that of epideictic (Arist. *Rhet.* 1.3.5–6, 1358b–59a: below, pp. 298–301). Are there ways of bringing Herodotus, Thucydides, and Aristotle into contact here, if Thucydides (in particular) and Herodotus in different ways give such weight to the *sumpheron* as the proper aim for symbouleutic oratory (given that nearly all of Herodotus' and Thucydides' speeches are, at least at bottom, symbouleutic)?³¹ Or should we be contrasting Herodotus and Thucydides here, given that, as we shall see, Herodotean counsellors also have a great deal to say about what is just or honourable? If we do feel that Aristotle and Thucydides hang together here against Herodotus, *how* we interpret that would depend on the view we take of Thucydides' speeches. If we believe that these were snapshots of real speeches, we might infer that real speakers did speak like this, and that if we feel uncomfortable with

³⁰ See e.g. n. 53 below.

³¹ Though this is complicated by the difficulty in Herodotus' case in defining what exactly counts as a speech and what does not: Pelling (2006b), 103–4. Thucydides' Funeral Speech is the most obvious exception, for even such uplifting cases as Demaratus' words to Xerxes at Hdt. 7.101–4 and the Athenians' response at Hdt. 8.143–4 have a symbouleutic element: do not regard Greek freedom so lightly, Xerxes; don't even think that the Athenians might come over, Mardonius; thanks for your concern, but send an army quickly, Spartans. On 8.143–4 see also n. 45.

that stress on expediency that is our problem, not Aristotle's or Thucydides'. If we suppose that Thucydides were concerned to produce 'model' speeches,³² or at least speeches which would be good ones if they were serving a model audience,³³ then we might trace in both Thucydides and Aristotle a feeling that this is the way speeches *ought* to be, concentrating on the *sumpheron* because that is the proper sphere of symbouleutic oratory; and there are several alternative steps that we might take instead.³⁴

Still, there are real difficulties in bringing Herodotus, Thucydides, and Aristotle into contact here, and difficulties at all three bases.

Aristotle

In fact, fourth-century Athenian symbouleutic oratory certainly *didn't* exclude the *dikaion*; it in fact had quite a lot to say about this, and the aim is often to show that courses exemplify both justice and expediency. That is amply demonstrated by Heath and by Hunt.³⁵

³² Cole (1991), 105–6: 'The text of Thucydides is a document available for consultation any time a model for words or a precedent for the course that events seem to be taking is required. . . . No speaker fails to make the kind of case that would be, under certain circumstances, the one Thucydides would like to see made and accepted by an audience.'

³³ de Ste. Croix (1972), 12: 'What seemed *ta deonta* to Thucydides may often not seem to us, unless we could suppose the speech to have been delivered to an audience of Thucydideses.'

³⁴ For my own approach to such matters see Pelling (2000), ch. 6, partly repr. in Rusten (2009), 176–87. As will be clear in what follows, my own explanation is largely in terms of the changing texture of debate which Thucydides chooses to highlight; but I also discuss the Mytilenean case at Pelling (2000), 122 = Rusten (2009), 187, and suggest there that Thucydides abbreviates the speeches in such a way as to concentrate on steps of rational argument, leaving the emotional aspects to be made clear in the narrative. That emphasis on the 'rational' in speech-making may suggest some affinity of mindset between Aristotle and Thucydides, but the genres are so different that this should not be pressed.

³⁵ Heath (1990), 392–5, who goes on (395–6) to find confirmation in *RaA* and the *Rhetoric*; Hunt (2010), ch. 7, esp. 155–9, and on the particular case of arguments from reciprocity, ch. 8. Some of their examples are cases where speakers combine the two by arguing that it is also expedient to be (seen to be) just, e.g. Demosthenes *On the Symmories* and *On the Freedom of the Megalopolitans*; that is not far from the more nuanced interrelationship of *dikaion* and *sumpheron* that Aristotle in fact recommends, as we shall see.—How much knowledge Aristotle in fact had of real-life forensic and symbouleutic oratory is questionable. Trevett (1996) argues that his political and forensic examples in the *Rhetoric* are drawn from oral tradition, and that only the epideictic instances are based on study of written texts. For him 'Aristotle reveals a detached and somewhat unsympathetic attitude towards "real-life" oratory and its practitioners' (1996: 379).

But, before concluding that this is a problem for Aristotle's analysis, we should look more closely at what Aristotle says:

Each of the three types [of oratory] has a different *objective*, and as there are three types, so there are three objectives. The objective of the deliberative orator is *advantage* or *harm* (τὸ συμφέρον καὶ βλαβερὸν), as to exhort is to urge as being more advantageous, to deter to dissuade as being more harmful, and other aspects, such as justice or nobility, are ancillary. That of the forensic speaker is *justice* or *injustice* (τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὸ ἄδικον), though he too will bring in other aspects as ancillaries. The object of display oratory is *nobility* and *baseness* (τὸ καλὸν καὶ τὸ αἰσχρόν), to which speakers also relate the other aspects.

Here is a sign that the objective of each type is as given. Orators would on occasion not quibble with other aspects of their case—the litigant (ὁ δικάζόμενος) would not dispute whether an event had occurred or been harmful, but he would never concede that he was in the wrong. For in that case there would be no need of a trial. Similarly, deliberators (οἱ συμβουλευόντες) frequently concede other aspects of their claims, but never that they are urging a disadvantageous (ἀσύμφορα) course of action or deterring their audience from a beneficial one—on the other hand, they often do not trouble their heads at all as to the injustice (ἄδικον)³⁶ of subjugation of their neighbours, even if those neighbours have done nothing wrong. Those, again, giving praise or blame do not consider whether their subject has acted for or against his interests (εἰ συμφέροντα ἔπραξεν ἢ βλαβερά), but rather count it often to his praise that he acted nobly in contempt for his own advantage. For instance, Achilles is commended for his service to his companion Patroclus, when he knew that he would consequently die while he might otherwise live. Such a death was the nobler course for him, but his interest was to live. (1.3.5–6, 1358b–59a, trans. Lawson-Tancred [adapted], Penguin edn.)

At 2.22.9 (1395a) Aristotle then picks up on the *sumpheron* as the distinctive symbouleutic aim, the *dikaion* as the dicanic.

One immediately suspects that the slickness of the threefold division may have influenced the schematism here (as Quintilian pointed out, 3.4.16),³⁷ rather as Cicero was so delighted to connect the threefold function of rhetoric—*flectere, delectare, probare*—with

³⁶ Or, if the manuscripts' οὐκ before ἄδικον is retained, 'they often do not trouble at all' to show that such subjugation 'is not unjust'. The point remains the same, and I see no need for the deletion.

³⁷ So also Heath (1990), 396.

the three styles—*grande*, *medium*, and *tenuë*—and came up with something that is not particularly impressive.³⁸ Here too it all seems rather over-neat, in view of that emphasis we often find in real-life symbouleutic speeches on questions of justice; similar problems arise with Aristotle's subordination of the *sumpheron* in dicanic cases, which seems to allow much less concentration on the interests of the city than we find in real speeches.³⁹

Still, even in this over-schematism Aristotle leaves a considerable space for *dikaion* arguments, insisting only that they must be used in a subordinate way, just as *sumpheron* arguments can be used in forensic speeches but must be ancillary. And his clinching argument, that no symbouleutic orator would ever *abandon* the claim to expediency, does seem a fair one.⁴⁰

Aristotle also seems to allow more space in actual human behaviour for people to pursue the *dikaion* as well as the *sumpheron*. True, he at one point says that people 'do not believe that anyone would willingly do anything except for their own interest' (*ἀπιστοῦσι γὰρ ἄλλο τι πράττειν ἐκόντα πλὴν τὸ συμφέρον*); but the context there makes it more complicated, because Aristotle is recommending speakers to concentrate on moral purpose, *προαίρεσις*, rather than on intellect, *διάνοια*:

And one should not speak as though from intellect, as is currently done, but from moral purpose: 'Yet I wished; for I chose it; and if I did not profit from it, it was still better.' The one is of the prudent man, the other of the good one; it is for the prudent man to pursue advantage and for the good one nobility. But if the claim should be incredible, then one should add the reason, as Sophocles does; and an example is the case of Antigone, that she was more concerned for her brother than for a husband or children; for the others could be replaced if they died, but

³⁸ Cic. *Orat.* 69 with Douglas (1957) and Fantham (1984).

³⁹ Aeschines' *Against Ctesiphon* and Demosthenes' *On the Crown* are the prime examples, but there are many more. The rhetorical appositeness of the argument is especially clear and interesting in Lysias 1, as the speaker Euphiletus projects himself as 'acting in the interest of the state': 'he did not, in fact, kill Eratosthenes: he executed him' (Herman 1993, 412 and 408 [his italics]). I discuss the rhetorical technique there at Pelling (2000), 225–30.

⁴⁰ Cf. Hunt (2010), 157: 'every one of our assembly speeches invokes the interests of Athens', though justice is often claimed as well. Hunt also points out (2010: 158) that arguments from interest are often placed in pivotal positions.

My mother and my father being in Hades,
 Never might I receive another brother . . .

But if you do not have a reason, you must still show that you are aware of saying incredible things, but that you are by nature of this kind; for men do not believe that anyone would willingly do anything except for their own interest. (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 3.16.9 = 1417a, trans. Lawson-Tancred [adapted])

So Aristotle's main point here is that the concentration on moral arguments projects a more attractive character, that of the good person rather than the prudent. (He is of course talking about forensic oratory here, not symbouleutic, so there is no unease with the earlier passage in this concentration on projecting morality rather than expediency.) It is just that *in cases where moral motivation is incredible* the orator must set out the reasoning if he is not to lose the goodwill of his audience: such reasons may be formulated in terms of expediency (as in Antigone's case, though there it is a rather quirky sort of expediency⁴¹), in view of people's readiness to believe that people characteristically pursue their own interest;⁴² or the speaker may simply have to admit that he is the sort of person who acts in inexplicable ways. This is advice on practical oratory, rather like the suggestion that one can expose bogus claims to the *dikaion* by demonstrating that the man in fact is guided by *sumpheronta* (2.23.16 = 1399a, a passage exploited by Macleod).⁴³ That need not imply that everyone pursues *sumpheronta* all the time, any more than the present passage suggests that moral motivation cannot be made credible—indeed, it should be made credible wherever possible, as the character thus projected is a preferable one; it is just that, when a moral reason is not available, a prudential one will have to do, for

⁴¹ The reference is to *Antigone* 904–12, well chosen as a case where a speaker's motivation would be bewildering if it were not explained. Antigone's professed reason there is that husbands and children would be replaceable, but in her case brothers are not: a sort of practical utilitarianism, certainly expedient rather than moral—or perhaps one should say that in that case 'expedient' considerations add up to constituting a 'moral' case that she *should* act in the way that she says. The same goes for the parallel explanation given by Intaphrenes' wife at Hdt. 3.119.6.

⁴² That point recurs in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1162b33–5), taken by Christ (2006), 15 as an epigraph to his ch. on 'the self-interested citizen'. There too it is qualified: 'all or most people' want to do what is good (*καλά*), but in reality choose what is useful (*ὠφέλιμον*).

⁴³ Macleod (1974), 389 = (1983), 56; (1978), 65 = (1983), 89. The procedure of the Athenians at Thuc. 1.76.2 (below, p. 308) and of Hermocrates at 6.76.2–4 is exactly similar, and so is that of Gelon at Hdt. 7.158.1–2 (below, p. 304).

‘[e]ven such a *reason* is better than none at all’.⁴⁴ At 2.14.2 = 1390b Aristotle in fact finds it a feature of the people at the right age that they do not live purely by nobility (τὸ καλόν) nor by expediency (τὸ συμφέρον) but by a harmonious blend of both—itself an interesting formulation. Nor, finally, is there any expectation that the *dikaion* and the *sumpheron* will regularly clash; indeed, rather the opposite. At 1.6.16 justice is something which is ‘expedient to everyone’ (κοινῇ συμφέρον, 1362b), and the same assumption is visible about *true* justice at 1.15.7 = 1375b.

So Aristotle presents a distinctly more nuanced view about the role of the *dikaion* in real symbouleutic speeches. He is not saying that considerations of justice should be excluded from the argument; nor is he claiming that humans are concerned only with what is in their own interest. But one thing can be extracted from his treatment, and this is that *συμφέρον* is in no way an uneasy word; he can emphasize this as the primary purpose of symbouleutic without feeling that this is in any way an embarrassing admission. To pursue τὸ καλόν exclusively is in fact an indication of immaturity (2.12.2 = 1389a), the mirror image of the way that the exclusive pursuit of τὸ συμφέρον is a sure sign of being past one’s best (2.13.9–13 = 1389b–90a). That is striking, and it confirms how much emotive power the interest of the polis exercised in Greek thought. There may genuinely be a lesson here for our interpretation of, in particular, Thucydides; but first let us look at Herodotus.

Herodotus

Some people in Herodotus certainly try to be honourable. Maeandrius (not the most likely candidate) explicitly ‘wanted to be the most just (δικαιοτάτος) man alive’, even if he did not manage it (3.142.1); Darius had reason to think Scythes of Zancle ‘the most just of those who had come from Greece to his court’ (6.24), presumably because his return to Sicily and then back to Persia could at each stage have gone against his interests; and then there was Aristides (8.79.1). Moral arguments also often figure in Herodotean speeches. We might think, for instance, of Proteus at 2.115, weighing his horror at Paris’ outrage against his moral duty to a guest; or of the emphasis

⁴⁴ Cope and Sandys (1887), ad loc.

on the honourable in the Athenians' response to Persian feelers at 8.143–4; or of Soclees arguing against restoring the Athenian tyrants because it is 'contrary to justice', *παρὰ τὸ δίκαιον* (5.92η.5, cf. 92α.1).⁴⁵ Admittedly, there is not a total contrast with Thucydides here, as some of his speakers also strike for the high moral ground: the Plataeans for instance stress the moral claims of their service to Greece back in the Persian Wars (Thuc. 3.53–9), and Nicias encourages his troops to hope for divine favour in return for his past goodness (7.77), and we shall later see some more complicated patterns of justification as well. The difference may be that the unpersuasiveness of such arguments is often felt in Thucydides, while in Herodotus the speakers may seem to be getting it right.

It is less clear that they are always getting it right *because* those arguments are moral. Even Soclees, despite that culminating stress on 'justice', has concentrated on all the awful things that tyrants do; a *sumpheron* claim is not too far away, and the solemn appeal to the Spartans 'not to establish tyrannies *in the cities*'—not just 'in Athens'—again draws attention to what may follow if this precedent is allowed (5.92η.5, cf. 92α.1). In fact, Aristotle's insistence that moral arguments should only be ancillary often applies to Herodotean symbolaletic as well. For instance, 'it would be disgraceful for Cyrus to be worsted by a woman' is only a subordinate argument in Croesus' advice at 1.207.5, and the weight falls rather on the strategic case for advance rather than retreat; at 5.49.2 Aristagoras moves quickly on from the 'reproach and pain' that the Ionian enslavement should inspire in fellow Greeks to dwell on all the attractions that Persian wealth might have for the Spartans (or so he clearly thinks,

⁴⁵ There is more to say about these last two cases, in particular the complex interplay between 8.143–4 and the narrative of early book 9 (Pelling 2006b, 112–14) and the degree to which Soclees concentrates on the internal misdeeds of tyranny at the expense of meeting the Spartans' points about Athenian external aggression (Pelling 2006b, 106–8); but the point here is the choice of rhetorical strategy, whatever its relation to the contextual complexities. I say some more about the way that Soclees' rhetoric might suggest the contrasting values of different periods—Homeric, late 6th-cent., and Herodotus' present—in Pelling (2006a), 101–3.—Other speeches where concerns of morality figure include 3.21, the Ethiopian's protest at Cambyses' unjust aggression; 3.73, Gobryas' horror at Persians being ruled by a Mede—'and one with no ears!'; 4.119, why it would not be right for the kings to support the Scythians; part of Artabanus' speech at 7.10 ζ–η, attacking the 'injustice' of Mardonius in slandering the Greeks; 7.45–6, Xerxes and Artabanus; and however odd in other ways, Xerxes' rebuke of the Hellespont at 7.35.2.

and he does not seem to be wrong⁴⁶); and at 1.155.3–4 ‘do not destroy an ancient city that has done and is doing nothing wrong’ is only a preliminary for Croesus’ better suggestion of how to weaken the Lydians. Sometimes, too, the relevance of justice is simply the expediency of being seen to be just:⁴⁷ that is the point of Croesus’ advice to Cyrus, suggesting that he set up guards to extract from the Persian looters a tithe for the gods, for ‘in that way you will not be hated for taking away the property, and they will accept that you are acting justly and willingly do what you say’ (1.89.3). Particularly telling is the speech of Leutychidas at 6.86. That is pre-eminently a case centring on justice, but Leutychidas still phrases its point in terms of expediency: Glaucus (Leutychidas argues) paid the price for even thinking of breaking his oath, and the Athenians now need to heed the lesson.⁴⁸ The subsequent narrative shows that they do not, and they suffer for it—even if, paradoxically, Greece eventually benefits as a whole (7.144.2).

Nor is it always straightforward to disentangle what is moral from what is expedient. That indignant search for revenge, stressed for instance by Xerxes when he announces his plan to invade Greece (7.8) and so familiar in Greek thought (above, p. 291): is that a moral imperative, or is it a matter of the interest of self and state, defending and promoting honour and power? And what of the commitment to freedom with all its inspirational force—but, as Herodotus makes clear, a force that rests on the way that free people are fighting for their own benefit rather than for a master (5.78), so that their advantage is in point as well? What is clear is that such arguments are typically reinforced in a prudential rather than ethical direction. Xerxes reflects on the way that the Persian tradition of expansion ‘works out for the better’ (7.8*a*.1), and counts up the ‘goods’ that can be expected from invasion (7.8*γ*); Miltiades urges on Callimachus the dangers of fragmentation if the freedom-fighting at Marathon is delayed, and the prospect of freedom is itself put in terms of ‘primacy among the Greek cities’ for Athens and everlasting fame for

⁴⁶ Pelling (2007), esp. 189–90. His emphasis is similar at Athens (5.97), combining advantage (‘the goods in Asia’) and morality (what it was ‘reasonable’ for Athens to do for its colony Miletus), but ending with ‘there was nothing that he did not promise them . . .’.

⁴⁷ Cf. the technique of Demosthenes in *On the Symmories* and *On the Freedom of the Megalopolitans*: above, n. 35.

⁴⁸ See Lateiner, pp. 167–8 in this volume.

Callimachus himself (6.109). When the Scythians urge the Ionian tyrants to destroy the Bosphorus bridge and trap Darius, they begin with a moral argument: Darius instructed you to wait sixty days, and those have passed: 'you are not behaving justly (*οὐ ποιεῖτε δίκαια*) by remaining' (4.136.3). But again there is a strong argument from self-interest, just as there was a few chapters earlier when the first Scythian message arrived: they had the opportunity then to act in a way that neither Darius nor the Scythians could criticize (4.133.2), so once again we might sense that element of advantage in just behaviour; and now they can go away and rejoice in their new-found freedom, confident that Darius will no longer be able to retaliate (4.136.4, cf. 133.2). As it happens, there is a trumping argument from even greater self-interest, as Histiaeus sees that the tyrants' own positions would be under threat without Persian power (4.137.2). That is not to the Ionians' credit (4.142). But it is the choice of arguments rather than their success that is telling, showing how considerations of justice can mesh inextricably with those of advantage, and how rhetoric is at its most powerful when this is the case.

It can be less powerful too; when it is, it is instructive to see what goes wrong. When the Greek ambassadors wrangle before Gelon at Hdt. 7.157–62 they phrase their cities' claims in very moral ways,⁴⁹ but Gelon himself grasps that the fine words are only a mask for a 'self-seeking argument', *λόγον . . . πλεονέκτην* (7.158.1): that is effectively the ploy that we have seen Aristotle recommending, to counter a justice argument by showing that the speakers' actions have been based on expediency (above, p. 300). We will see a few chapters later that Gelon can recognize and welcome true 'justice' when he sees it (7.164), and he does not see it here. And yet this is not real expediency either; the ambassadors themselves understandably see the disagreement with Gelon in terms of what is *dikaion* (*εἰ δ' ἄρα μὴ δικαιοῖς . . .*, 'if you do not think it just. . .', 7.159). So what is going wrong? The implication does *not* seem to be that the Greeks should have got their justice arguments into better order; it is rather that their narrow preoccupation with their cities' own moral claims has blinded them to the broader interests of the Greek cause. Their perceptions of what is just have got in the way of what is expedient. Herodotus deftly intimates, too, that this is not an isolated case.

⁴⁹ Cf. Scardino (2007), 220–1, rightly comparing the tropes of an *Epitaphios* and noting the preparation for 9.26–7 (below, p. 305).

Gelon's parting shot—'go back and tell Greece that the spring has gone out of the year', 7.162.1—evokes a famous remark of Pericles in a funeral speech, twice quoted by Aristotle himself (*Rhet.* 1.7.34 = 1365a, 3.10.7 = 1411a). Those funereal suggestions hint that the Greek alliance will go on to lose, not just the prospect of Sicilian allies, but also the flower of their own youth;⁵⁰ and, whether the Periclean speech is that after the Samian War of 441–440 or that of the first year of the Peloponnesian War ten years later,⁵¹ the contemporary resonance reminds Herodotus' readers of the consequences that such inter-Greek jealousies and antagonisms will bring. It is all too easy for pride in one's city to lead one sadly, and bloodily, astray.⁵² Equally, sometimes—just sometimes—such dangers can be overcome: the similar wrangling before Plataea has a happier conclusion, when the Athenians express their readiness to relinquish their claim to the position of honour (9.26–7) and their rivals the Tegeans clearly accept the verdict too (9.28.1, 3). As so often in these later books, things go right, just about—but they could so easily again have gone wrong.

So any attempt to see Herodotus' speakers as championing the honourable and the just requires strong qualifications. Moral and pragmatic considerations should combine if symbouleutic rhetoric is to be effective; often the moral dimension is either ancillary, as Aristotle was to recommend, or impossible to disentangle from the pragmatic. And, when things go wrong, it can be an over-narrow perception of what is honourable that leads people astray.

⁵⁰ Pelling (2006a), 91–2.

⁵¹ A 441–440 date: e.g. Treves (1941), Stadter (1973b), 119 and (1989), 110. A 431–430 date: Fornara (1971), 83 n. 12. Aristotle presumably knew this from oral tradition (Trevett 1996, 375). Girard (1919) may well be right in suggesting that both Pericles and 'Gelon' are echoing a proverb, but that does not exclude the Periclean hint in Herodotus: if the phrase was particularly associated with him at the time of Aristotle, it was surely even more associated with him in Herodotus' day when the events were so much more recent.

⁵² Within Herodotus there may be a wider point again, for 7.165 goes on to suggest that Gelon might not have been able or willing to help anyway, because he was so pressed by threats at home. Herodotus does not commit himself to the truth of that: it is what 'those who live in Sicily' say. But even if those Sicily-dwellers were right, the points made here about the misdirection of the Greek rhetoric still stand. It would indeed be even more telling if, as Baragwanath (2008), 219–20 suggests, 'Gelon' is choosing his words in the knowledge that he could rely on those internal Greek jealousies to give him an excuse to refuse.

Thucydides

Many modern readers find Thucydides' speeches uncomfortable in their concentration on self-interest and their frequent neglect or dismissal of ethical factors, and are tempted to regard that as a presentation of the city as morally bankrupt;⁵³ yet Herodotus' model ought to give us pause, and so should that emphasis of Aristotle on the interests of the city. Perhaps, indeed, we should start from the other end, and assume that 'expediency' is *and should be* the core of political arguments, not out of a cynical, neo-conservative-before-its-time 'realism' but because of the *moral* claim that the city has on its citizens.⁵⁴ If anything, then, Athenians may deserve credit for doing the best they can for subject peoples insofar as that can be reconciled with the best for Athens itself (cf. esp. Thuc. 1.76.3–4). Brian Bosworth has argued for 'the humanitarian aspect of the Melian dialogue', emphasizing that the Athenians are made to seem genuinely concerned to save the Melians' lives if they can: *do not make us do this . . .* Whatever one makes of that argument, it is certainly not a category mistake to think in such 'moral' or 'humanitarian' terms even in so unlikely a setting as that.⁵⁵

In fact, there is a good deal of talk of morality in Thucydides' speeches, and not just in the cases we have already seen (p. 302):⁵⁶ all the modern talk of the 'realist' Thucydides should not blind us to that. Cleon has a lot to say about the *dikaion* in the Mytilenean

⁵³ Cf. e.g. Macleod (1977), 243 = (1983), 119 on the way that the Plataean speeches 'reveal how conventional morality is undermined in war' or Finley (1967), 38 on the Melian Dialogue as 'a symbol of the increasing brutalization of the Greek mind'. Hornblower (1987), 69–71 discusses whether the speeches give support to the view that Thucydides thought 'things got worse' (he is sceptical); one of the aspects he addresses is the apparent reduction in 'the moral element' between books 3 and 5 (the Plataean Debate and the Melian Dialogue).

⁵⁴ If so, then that of course complicates Aristotle's neat distinction between the two categories; but then Aristotle too goes on to complicate that distinction, as we have seen. One can indeed regard this as a further instance of the favourite Greek presentational habit of progressive correction, whereby a thesis is initially stated in a particularly clear-cut and simple way, then complicated and renounced in stride: cf. e.g. Lattimore (1958), 10–12, Rood (1998), index s.v. 'correction, progressive' (esp. 230 n. 16); Pelling (2002); index s.v. 'progressive redefinition'.

⁵⁵ Bosworth (1993); cf. Hornblower (2008), iii. 218, 223–4.

⁵⁶ Cf. Scardino pp. 82–3 in this volume. Heath (1990) argued that it was a characteristic of Athenian speakers, but not of non-Athenian, to exclude considerations of justice; it will become clear that I think this an oversimplification.

Debate (3.39–40):⁵⁷ we may not like what Cleon says, but it is certainly there. Pericles makes moral claims for the city: they may be fewer and more qualified than we might expect, not put in terms of ‘justice’ (but I am not sure that we can neatly siphon off *dikaion* from other sorts of moral claims), doubtless undermined or at least qualified by the narrative, but we should certainly notice 2.40.5, rejecting the view that they simply follow the *xumpheron* (‘we are the only people to spread good no less through our confidence in freedom than in calculation of our interest’); and, perhaps even more striking, 2.41.3, ‘we are the only nation in the present day . . . against which no enemy feels resentment if they suffer at our hands and no subject feels outrage on the grounds that we are unworthy masters’. In neither case does the subsequent narrative encourage the reader to accept the claims uncritically, but the claims are made. It may be significant too that both Corinthian and Corcyraean speakers in book 1, aiming to influence an Athenian audience, think it worthwhile to say a lot about justice:⁵⁸ what both sides say may be transparently weak or indecisive, but they still judge it right for that audience, and we should be interested in Athenian audiences as well as Athenian speakers. It looks, indeed, as if they judged that audience right: we need not assume that the Athenian concern to respect the terms of the peace of 446 in their response to the Corcyraean envoys (1.44.1) was purely prudential. Elsewhere Thucydides does not give the impression, any more than Aristotle does, that humans care only about the expedient: think of those who ‘had some claim to nobility’ and consequently died all too soon in the plague (2.51.5).

Even the Athenian speech at Sparta at 1.73–8, whose tone so many critics have found implausibly hard and non-conciliatory, is not without a claim for moral justification. It certainly has a good deal on power, and its treatment of the Persian Wars deftly conveys a good deal of the Athenians’ formidable strength and quality while still, with at least a modicum of tact, displacing this to events of fifty years

⁵⁷ As Heath (1990), 388–9 acknowledges. That is not to deny that ‘justice’ for Cleon is made to sound disturbingly off-key: pp. 294–5, above.

⁵⁸ This is rightly stressed by Morrison (1999), esp. 112–13 and Rood (2006): both emphasize the complex interaction of justice and expediency arguments in the debate, as ‘we find that even if moral considerations are not essential for motivation, such appeals are important for providing a set of justifications for Athenian action’ (Morrison 1999, 113). Cf. also Heath (1990), 389–90.

earlier (1.73–4). But this is still only a subtext of that treatment of 480–479, and the surface sense in which the Athenians *justify* their rule on the basis of their contribution to the Greek national cause remains important: gratitude for the ‘benefit’ they conferred (ὠφελία, 1.73.2) is expected as well as fear. We should be alert to the breadth of connotation of phrases like οὕτε ἀπεικότως (‘not unreasonably’, 73.1), ἀξία λόγου (‘notable’, *ibid.*), πρὸς οἷαν ὑμῖν πόλιν μὴ εἴ βουλευομένοις ὁ ἀγὼν καταστήσεται (consider ‘what sort of city it is that you will be taking on if you make the wrong decision now’, 73.3), each one of which has both a moral (‘we deserve it’) and a prudential (‘do not underestimate us’) suggestion. And 74.4, echoing Hdt. 7.139, again claims both gratitude and respect as they stress the unique contribution which Athenian daring and self-sacrifice made to the national cause.

They go on to mention the laws of nature, which again provide some sort of justification for their rule: others should not ‘envy’ them this (1.75.1, 75.5). In that sense it is fair to compare Callicles’ argument in Plato’s *Gorgias* defending the rule of the stronger in terms of what ‘nature itself declares to be just’ (δίκαιον, 483c–d):⁵⁹ whatever Thucydides himself may have thought, his speakers here are justifying their rule. These may be the seeds of the later development in for instance the Melian Dialogue, where the question of justification is deflected rather than confronted;⁶⁰ but we are not there yet. The same goes for the remark that the Spartans are now ‘with an eye to expediency talking in terms of justice’ (1.76.2). That is similar to the rhetorical technique mentioned earlier (p. 300), using real behaviour to unmask the opponent’s hypocrisy, but it is not excluding any question of moral justification; indeed, it is seeking to make a moral point by hitting the opponent in his own moral claims. It is clear how much the Athenians do concede about their motivation, but we should also stress how much they claim; and they project moral rightfulness as well as power.

⁵⁹ The case of Thrasymachus in the *Republic* is more complicated: whereas Thrasymachus’ treatment of justice as ‘what’s good for the other person’ (343c) conveys disaffection with the whole idea, his definition of it as ‘the good of the stronger’ or ‘better’ (338c) would seem to offer a more Callicles-like justification of that ‘good’.

⁶⁰ Esp. at 5.89, 97, 101, and 107: cf. Bosworth (1993), 40 = Rusten (2009), 329–30.

Even Euphemus at Camarina justifies Athens *to an extent*.⁶¹

Our purpose in coming here was to renew our previous alliance, but now that the Syracusan speaker has attacked us we must speak about our empire too, and explain that it is reasonable for us to hold it. (περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς εἰπεῖν ὡς εἰκότως ἔχομεν) . . .

So we rule for two reasons: first, that we deserve it (ἄξιοί τε ὄντες), because we provided the Greek cause with the largest fleet and an unequivocal commitment while our subjects served the Persians willingly with the intention of causing us harm; secondly, because we wanted to strengthen ourselves against the Peloponnesians. We are not mouthing any fine words (οὐ καλλιεπούμεθα) to the effect that it is reasonable for us to rule (εἰκότως ἄρχομεν) after destroying the barbarian single-handed, or that we were taking risks for the freedom of these subjects rather than of everyone, including ourselves. But no one should incur jealousy for protecting his own security. (Thucydides 6.82.1, 83.1–2)

The language deserves close analysis. *εἰκότως* at 6.82.1 ('reasonably')⁶² echoes *οὐκ ἀπεικότως* ('not without reason') in the first Spartan debate, and there is at least an attempt to show that the allies behaved badly, and thus Athenians have not behaved 'unjustly' (*ἀδίκως*, 82.3–4); and, however briefly the point is made, the Athenians 'deserve' to rule because of services to Greece (*ἄξιοι*, 83.1)—another echo of 1.75.1.

However, it is also not the same texture, and the echoes do encourage us to compare the two speeches and notice how much has changed. The line is undeniably more hardheaded here, and no bones are made about the Athenian desire to strengthen themselves 'against the Peloponnesians'. The *xumpheron* subtext of book 1 has become the text here: those seeds have grown. 'We are not mouthing any fine words' about the Persian Wars, says Euphemus (*οὐ καλλιεπούμεθα*, 83.2), rather as the ambassadors to Melos excluded 'fine words' about 480 and all that (5.89.1). That could be taken in several different ways—Dover rightly points out the rhetorical effect of the

⁶¹ Scardino (2007), 583.

⁶² *εἰκότως* conveys what a human would think it *εἰκός* to conjecture or predict, and so covers the full range of reasons that may make an action or development make sense. Hammond here translates 'some words in justification of our empire', Lattimore '... and our right to hold it': both may overstate the moral dimension—Warner's 'the good reasons we have for holding it' is better, and so is Stahl's 'not incomprehensibly' (2003: 45 with n. 22 = 'nicht unbegreiflicherweise'; 1966: 45 with n. 20)—but *pace* Stahl we should not suppress that dimension completely.

*praeteritio*⁶³—but the shift of emphasis and space remains expressive; the second *ἐκτότως* ('reasonably') at 83.2 captures a claim that is *not* made, not one that is,⁶⁴ and the peroration at 6.87.2 pointedly takes several favourite Athenian claims—their imperial status, their role as liberator, their *polupragmosune*—and gives them an unexpectedly self-interested twist. The traditional contrast of the tone of this speech with 1.73–8 is still perfectly fair.⁶⁵

In some ways it is Hermocrates, Euphemus' Syracusan opponent, who is the less concerned with moral claims and who turns more to expediency—indeed, to threats,⁶⁶ as is particularly clear in his concluding two sentences at 6.80.4–5: 'if we are the victors, you will likewise be punished for causing such dangers . . . you should take steps to avoid both the disgrace of gaining them as your masters and the enmity with us that would result, and would not pass swiftly'. We have also already seen how he has turned the expected emphasis on 'nearness' to convey a neighbourly menace.⁶⁷ Athenian *adikia* is taken for granted (especially 77.1, 79.1, 80.2), but the main thrust of this emphasis on their past expansion is to make the people of Camarina realize their own vulnerability to further expansion now, very much in the manner that Herodotus' Scythian messengers dwell

⁶³ Dover, in Gomme et al. (1945–81), iv. 356.

⁶⁴ Still, Euphemus' words need not be excluding all 'fine statements', but only claims that would anyway be flimsy; the Athenians were not at all single-handed in 480–479 (even if they sometimes claimed they were), and were as proud of fighting for their own liberty (cf. Aesch. *Pers.* 402–5) as anyone else's.

⁶⁵ Pace Heath (1990), 386–7 and n. 5. The contrast is drawn by e.g. de Romilly (1963), 243–50; Dover, in Gomme et al. (1945–81), iv. 353–4; Raubitschek (1973), 36–8; Connor (1984), 183–4; Hornblower (2008), on 6.82–7. Strasburger (1958), 29–30 = Herter (1968), 521 = Rusten (2009), 209–10 gave it an unusual twist, concentrating on the greater frankness of the book 1 Athenians than of Euphemus; this is interestingly developed by Crane (1998), 285–93 ('in manipulating the facts, this crafty Athenian unwittingly speaks the truth . . .', 285). Yet we should not be so ready as Strasburger and Crane to regard as simple 'lie' or 'trickery' Euphemus' claim that the Athenians thought they were acting in self-defence: the last ten years of contemporary history have shown rather clearly that voters in a democracy can easily believe that what others see as unprovoked aggression is a necessary act of pre-emptive defence. Thucydides knew that very well: witness the emphasis on *sophrosune* at 6.6.2. Of course the Athenians also hoped for 'rule over all Sicily' (6.6.1), but Euphemus' stress rests on how that 'rule' might most realistically be exercised.

⁶⁶ So, rightly, Scardino (2007), 579: '[d]as Argument des δίκαιον ist implizit mit einer Drohung verbunden'.

⁶⁷ Above, p. 288.

on indiscriminate Persian aggression at 4.118 or his Spartans talk about the bumptious new Athenian democracy at 5.92.2. That is *xumpheron* as much as, if anything more than, *dikaion*.⁶⁸ With Hermocrates too there has been a genuine progression in his speeches: we can doubtless detect the seeds of this expediency emphasis in his speech in book 4, where *adikia* is similarly taken for granted (4.61.7), but the main emphasis there falls on the expediency of unity *for Sicily*. Those ringing words about Sicilian unity in book 4 strike a different note from the way he now acknowledges Camarina's suspicions of Syracuse, and particularly from his concluding threats. The proud confidence of his earlier speech in book 6 (6.33) and its anticipation of future glory are also rather different in tone from this: even within a few months of campaigning, in Syracuse as in Athens language is hardening and the emphasis on expediency is becoming less masked.

So an important point about these speeches is the change in texture during the war, and this is not just true about Athenian speakers. The space given to *dikaion* arguments diminishes, that given to *xumpheron* increases: this is war as that 'brutal school-master' yet again (3.82.2). We can even see an elegant microcosmic equivalent in the three Mytilenean speeches: the Mytileneans at Olympia allow almost equal space to *dikaion* and to *xumpheron* arguments, and keep them neatly separate; Cleon talks a lot about both, but the two spheres are coming to infect one another, and there is a tendency for the *dikaion* to be reduced to a way of phrasing the *xumpheron*; finally Diodotus gives up the *dikaion* almost completely.

There is still a point to be extracted from Herodotus and particularly Aristotle, and it is the same as before (p. 306). One should not write off that progression as simply 'moral decline'; the concentration on one's city's or nation's interests can be laudable rather than uncomfortable, and one can overdo as well as underdo a pre-occupation with 'justice'. Indeed, justice arguments were usually weak ones in the early speeches, not least because speakers became so easily entangled in their own arguments when claiming that they

⁶⁸ Heath (1990), 386–7 contrasts the way that Hermocrates 'has made justice a leading theme' and launched a 'moral attack on the empire' with Euphemus' emphasis on self-interest; that, I think, misses the thrust of Hermocrates' argument.

were acting, or had acted, with moral rectitude.⁶⁹ The decisions themselves were usually expediency-driven.⁷⁰ It is not surprising if such arguments come to be set aside, and the effect of the war is to expose human truth as much as to impose decline.⁷¹ If we notice a similar development in Tacitus' *Annals*, with a shift of tone between the polite emptinesses of the initial senatorial debate and the growing awareness of the power of the legions, we might well regard it as an abandoning of hypocrisy and an increasing acknowledgement of the realities of empire. In Thucydides too the development has its moral and honest side. Speakers are now being frank, and that at least is no bad thing.

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⁶⁹ A particularly clear case is the speech of the Mytileneans at Olympia (3.9–13), but in the Plataean Debate too both the Plataeans and the Thebans try to have it both ways, disclaiming personal responsibility on the grounds of external pressure but still claiming credit or imposing blame when it suits them: cf. (Mytileneans) Macleod (1978), 64–8 = (1983), 88–92 (*contra*, Heath 1990, 389 and n. 9; Hornblower 1991, 391–2 also has a reservation); (Plataeans) Macleod (1977) and Pelling (2000), 70–2.

⁷⁰ Thus my emphasis is close to that of Lateiner (2005), 87–8: '[i]n Thucydides' architecture, Book 3 marks the kinetic exit of mercy, moderation, fairness, and appeals to past norms and justice. . . . Atrocities replace sympathy or compassion, if we can assume they ever were a practiced norm—as opposed to an acknowledged morality.' He goes on to build on that final point, arguing that 'pity meant little' in political practice 'and thus in the narratives of the two first preserved historians' (2005: 91).

⁷¹ Cf. Wassermann (1947), 33–4 on the Melian Dialogue, quoted with approval by Scardino (2007), 479 n. 251: Thucydides' 'Athenians present the straightforward frankness, which has so frequently caused the Dialogue to be misunderstood as an example of ruthless brutality.' (But 'misunderstood' is wrong: straightforward frankness and ruthless brutality are not incompatible.)

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A Noble Alliance: Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon's Procles*

Emily Baragwanath

Xenophon, when he turned to writing history, harked back to his predecessors—and above all to the pair who form the subject of this collection—in ways that signal his adherence to the historiographical tradition, even as he underscored the distinctiveness of his own approach and philosophy of history.¹ Several works across his *œuvre* betray this influence, and not only the historiographical. *Cyropaedia* is inspired in its general conception by Herodotean ethnography and more specifically by Herodotus' portrait of Cyrus the Great, and relies on readers' detailed acquaintance with the *Histories*.² *Poroi* imitates Pericles' Funeral Oration in Thucydides (so Loraux 1986), or at least redeploys topoi of Athenian imperialism, whose most famous literary articulation is Pericles' speech.³ However, whereas Pericles devoted every last penny to war (Thuc. 2.13), Xenophon rejects war as financially wasteful, invoking the Peloponnesian War as his key proof (*Poroi* 5.12). Athens should instead devote all her resources to commerce and industry, and to the cultivation of peace. By taking as her model her conduct in the Persian Wars, assisting

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¹ This contribution should thus add to the case that the *Hellenica* is indeed a work of historiography, in the tradition of Herodotus and Thucydides: not e.g. a 'political pamphlet' (Tuplin 1993) or a work of indefinite genre.

² Riemann (1967).

³ Dillery (1993).

rather than coercing the Greeks (5.5), Athens could win the Greeks' affection⁴ and so improve her military and economic security. *Anabasis* draws on the works of both Herodotus and Thucydides, with allusions to the Persian Wars replaced by references to the Peloponnesian War as the Ten Thousand's journey comes to appear 'like a mirror of the experience of the Greeks at large over the previous few generations'.⁵

But the richest and most sustained response to the two historians is *Hellenica*, Xenophon's account of Greek affairs from 411 BC down to the battle of Mantinea (362 BC), which presents itself as a formal continuation of Thucydides' (uncompleted) *History*. Tempted by this circumstance, modern scholars have often drawn attention to the Thucydidean affinities of *Hellenica*, exposing how Xenophon at times adopts a Thucydidean register and evokes specific Thucydidean passages.⁶ Other readers have taken their cue from the judgements of ancient commentators like Dionysius of Halicarnassus, for whom Xenophon in his historical works was 'an imitator of Herodotus' (*Letter to Gnaeus Pompeius* 4).⁷ But the gesture of continuation can set Xenophon in the line of *both* his famous predecessors, signalling continuity back through Thucydides to Herodotus, with Xenophon laying claim to being the definitive post-Peloponnesian War historian, as Herodotus was *the* historian of the Persian Wars, and Thucydides *the* historian of the Peloponnesian War. The character of Xenophon's response to both predecessors in *Hellenica* leaves the strong impression (as we shall see) that the combination of the two is essential to his conception and representation of history.

In this chapter I begin with a brief overview of what Xenophon's self-declared emphases in *Hellenica* reveal of how he conceives of his role in the historiographical tradition (§I). I then contend that his conception of this role informs key moments in the work (§II), through an examination of how the speeches of Procles of Phlius (in an episode whose significance Xenophon's narrative underscores) contribute to Xenophon's construction of his historiographical persona.

⁴ προσφιλέστεροι . . . τοῖς Ἑλλήσι γενησόμεθα (*Poroi* 6.1).

⁵ Rood (2004a), 320. See also Nicolai (2010) on the 'negative' reception of Thucydides across several of Xenophon's less historiographical works (*Cyr.*, *Ag.*, *Lac. Pol.*, and *Hiero*), a reflection primarily of the contrast between Thucydides' stress on collectivities and institutions, Xenophon's on the single individual.

⁶ Most recently Rood (2004b).

⁷ Esp. Gray (1989) and (2011), 144–57.

I. XENOPHON'S EXPLICIT SELF-POSITIONING IN *HELLENICA*

With his surprising choice of beginning and ending, Xenophon created a new form of continuous history. Refusing to define his subject as a particular war, he staged his different conception of historical processes from that of forerunners and put aside the 'war monograph' form⁸ in favour of a form that is more appropriate to his own historical period: a period not bounded by a single war, and characterized by profound uncertainty and open-endedness. Much as Thucydides' beginning (recounting the Pentecontaetia rather than retelling the story of the Persian Wars) invited one to read his work as continuing on from where Herodotus had ended, so this opening invites one to regard *Hellenica* as the continuation of Thucydides—even as Xenophon checks this impulse by denying an entirely seamless continuation.⁹

Xenophon's occasional explicit remarks about what he has included and why¹⁰ further reveal his conception of his relationship to his predecessors. His references to readers' preformed expectations crystallize the sense that he is conscious of the historiographical tradition and deliberate in placing his own work within it. His emphasis on what is *axios*—worthy, of record or of memory—sets him firmly in the tradition of both Herodotus and Thucydides.¹¹ The related claim to narrate actions that are ἀξιομνημόνευτοι matches Herodotus' emphasis on sustaining memory and *kleos*;¹² and Xenophon agrees with the Homeric and Herodotean assumption that *fine* deeds (καλὰ ἔργα) are especially worthy of memorialization. The combination of μνήμης ἄξιον and similar is absent from Thucydides, whose history focuses on conveying the meaning of contemporary events rather than sustaining the *kleos* of individuals and cities.¹³ Even so, this is a difference only in emphasis: Thucydides'

⁸ Rood (2007), 155–6, cf. Marincola (2005), 308.

⁹ Cf. Hornblower (1995), 50.

¹⁰ The key passages in support of the ensuing observations are 2.3.56, 4.8.1, 5.1.4 (quoted at p. 321 below), 7.2.1 (quoted at p. 319 below), on which see Rahn (1971) and Gray (2003), 111–15.

¹¹ Cf. Breitenbach (1950).

¹² Herodotus writes so that time may not render human events ἐξίτηλα, and great and wondrous *erga* not become ἀκλεᾶ (proem).

¹³ It is not earlier traditions, but rather his own work, that Thucydides presents as eternal: as a κτήμα . . . ἐς αἰεὶ, 1.22.4.

description of his history as a *κτῆμα ἐς αἰεὶ* (1.22.4) evokes an idea of eternal memory, and he allows such speakers as Pericles or Brasidas to summon up notions of winning *kleos* and eternal reputation.¹⁴

And yet even as Xenophon works on the traditional assumption that a history should record what is *axion*, at the same time he redefines the bounds of what is *axion*. Thus he revises the assumption that 'greatness'—the primary traditional criterion of worthiness for inclusion in a history, and so for being remembered across time—is a function above all of *dynamis* expressed through quantifiable indications (men, money, ships, walls):¹⁵

Of great cities (τῶν μὲν μεγάλων πόλεων), if they do anything fine, all writers set it down in memory; but it seems to me that if a polis that is small achieves many fine deeds, they are yet more worthy of being set forth (εἴ τις μικρὰ πόλις οὐσα πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ ἔργα διαπέπρακται, ἔτι μᾶλλον ἄξιον εἶναι ἀποφαίνειν). (*Hell.* 7.2.1)

The Herodotean character of Xenophon's expression in this passage suggests an implicit rejoinder to *Histories* 1.5.4. Phlius indeed provides a paradigm of how, even in the absence of change over time, a small city may be 'great' in its ethical achievement.¹⁶ Thus Xenophon gives an ethical twist to the familiar Herodotean motif of the 'significance of the insignificant',¹⁷ reflecting in so doing the interest in ethical definitions of his teacher Socrates.¹⁸ And yet prior to this, Thucydides had already followed Herodotus in his close and detailed focus on the events at Plataea (books 2–3)—a small city with

¹⁴ Cf. Pericles on the *δόξα αἰείμνηστος* of the Athenian Empire (2.64.3–5), Brasidas urging the Acinthians to leave to posterity the same (4.87.6).

¹⁵ Herodotus describes small cities on the grounds that they may one day become large (1.5.3–4). Delphi advises Croesus to make an alliance with 'the most powerful' (*δυνατωτάτους*) of the Greek states, and accordingly he approaches Athens and then Sparta; and these two cities (especially Athens with her fleet of 200 ships) are most responsible for winning the war (see esp. 7.139)—even as their material resources do not match those of Eastern powers. Persia's wealth and numerical superiority are recounted at length and aid her conquest of other nations, even though this material greatness does not secure victory over Greece. Thucydides realized his war would be 'greater and more worthy of record than previous wars' (1.1.2) on the grounds of the great preparation on both sides. He emphasizes material resources as well as perceptions of such resources: see Kallet-Marx (1993), Kallet (2001). The ultimate winner of the war is Sparta, whose greater *dynamis* in landholdings and numbers of allies Thucydides underscored (1.10.2).

¹⁶ See Gray (1989), 165–70 for Xenophon's focus on Phlius' ethical achievement.

¹⁷ See van der Veen (1996) for this motif.

¹⁸ Xenophon *Mem.* 1.1.16, 3.9.1–3, 14–15, cf. Gray (2003), 112.

the great ethical achievement of having stood at Athens' side at Marathon in 490 BC, and (alone of Boeotians) with combined Greeks on her own territory in 479. When it suits his rhetorical purpose Thucydides can play a different variation on the greatness topos, back-peddalling from the claim of the unprecedented greatness of his own war (1.23.1) in commenting on the Pylos–Thermopylae comparison, 'to compare small with great' (4.36); and in fact this apologetic move (as Hornblower observes) 'is itself Herodotean'.¹⁹ The difference in Xenophon is one of emphasis rather than stark contrast; and he harks back to a tradition marked by significant continuity between Herodotus and Thucydides.

In a final and more radical variation on the same theme, at the close of *Hellenica* Xenophon stakes a claim for a brand of greatness for his subject that (as Rood has observed) 'is not the greatness of any particular war, but the greatness of the confusion caused by the failure of wars to produce any long-lasting solution of the internal problems of Greece'.²⁰

Xenophon, then, takes over the assumption that what is 'great' deserves a place in a historical account, but at the same time—qualifying the emphasis of both Herodotus and Thucydides—he redefines the very concept of 'greatness', suggesting that it may be unrelated to power, and, conversely, that power (and self-sufficiency) may be less relevant than usually supposed. And yet even as he asserts difference, highlighting a distinctive aspect of his own approach, of course he too in *Hellenica* puts most of his energy into describing the deeds of big cities. Despite the rhetoric, continuity with his predecessors is at least as marked a feature of his text as difference.

Xenophon also makes a claim for expanding the notion of what is worthy of record to include an individual's character and disposition, and his resultant leadership qualities. Thus at 5.1.4, he

¹⁹ Hornblower (1991), 34. Hornblower notes that the same expression (*ὡς μικρὸν μεγάλῳ εἰκάσαι*) occurs at Hdt. 4.99.5.

²⁰ Rood (2007), 155. Rood suggests that the unconventional placement of this claim—at the close rather than near the opening of the work—'suggests that the presentational strategies favored by Thucydides can no longer do justice to the texture of a Greek world that has moved beyond a bipolar structuring of power' (2007: 156). But again, Thucydides' presentation of the outcome of Athens' Sicilian Expedition anticipates Xenophon's approach in its emphasis on the greatness of destruction (cf. *πανωλεθρία*, 7.86.6—a rare and Herodotean term), and, in the preceding narrative, confusion—though in this case, the contrast between winners and losers could not be clearer (cf. 7.87.5).

invokes the historiographic tradition, and affirms his own place in it by pointing to shared assumptions, but then changes tack to assert instead the particular worth of reflecting on something less often highlighted, namely a man's leadership qualities:

I know that in these things I am describing no expense nor danger nor notable stratagem; but by Zeus this seems to me to be worthy for a man to consider (τόδε ἄξιόν μοι δοκεῖ εἶναι ἀνδρὶ ἐννοεῖν), what sort of conduct it was that enabled Teleutias to make those he commanded so disposed to him. For this now is an achievement of a true man that is much more worthy of note than much money and many dangers (τοῦτο γὰρ ἤδη πολλῶν καὶ χρημάτων καὶ κινδύνων ἀξιολογώτατον ἀνδρὸς ἔργον ἐστίν). (5.1.4)

With the claim that what Teleutias has accomplished is an ἔργον ἀξιολογώτατον Xenophon gestures back to Herodotus' stated subject matter ('great and wondrous *erga*'), but redefines it to embrace specifically a man's excellent leadership.²¹ The preceding description of Teleutias' voyaging home μακαριώτατα ('happily', 'blessedly', 5.1.3) thanks to his men's extreme praise also recalls the description of the Argives pronouncing happy/blessed (ἐμακάριζον) the young men Cleobis and Biton—the second-place winners in Solon's happiness ranking, on the grounds of their pious action in life and honourable death (Hdt. 1.31.3). Xenophon intimates that recognition for excellent leadership is an important component of happiness, one overlooked by Herodotus' Solon; and further that a man can win this variety of happiness even before the end of his life.

Beyond articulating a different sense of the appropriate subject matter for history, Xenophon here demands a distinctive, more reflective approach to the text, in urging readers to reflect (ἄξιόν . . . ἀνδρὶ ἐννοεῖν) on more philosophical matters of character and ideal leadership.

Thus in his explicit self-positioning Xenophon sets himself in line of both historiographical predecessors, as well as Socratic philosophy, even as he advances his own distinct idea of what historiography should entail. Next we shall find that a similar impression surfaces more implicitly from certain significant narratives of *Hellenica*.

²¹ Thucydides' use of *ergon* of the Athenian failure in Sicily, when claiming it to be the greatest (disaster) ever in history ('of those we know ἀκοῇ'), appears to be distinctly Herodotean, thus evoking Herodotus' wars only to trump them. For Herodotus' very broad concept of *erga*, see Immerwahr (1960).

II. PROCLES OF PHLIUS

Thebes' unprecedented expedition in 370 BC right up to the villages of Sparta prompts the Athenians to contemplate aiding their erstwhile enemy (6.5.33). At this key historical juncture, and again in the debate that ensues at Athens about the structure of the proposed Athenian–Spartan alliance, Procles of Phlius takes centre stage in Xenophon's narrative to deliver two almost back-to-back speeches.²² At first glance it seems remarkable that the citizen of such a small town should be granted more direct discourse than any other figure in the work. Modern scholarship by and large assumes that the episode is reported *wie es eigentlich gewesen*, and judges Procles' speeches mediocre.²³ And yet the narrative prominence of Procles, whose very name means 'the renowned', accords with Xenophon's promotion of the potential noteworthiness of what might initially appear insignificant (as at 7.2.1, discussed above, where in fact Procles' home town Phlius is the chosen example). Might this very insignificance have made him an ideal speaker of wisdom? Through Procles' speeches, I shall argue, Xenophon draws on the historiographical authority of both Herodotus and Thucydides to spotlight the significance of the moment, but also to lend authority to—and define through contrast—his own broader historical/philosophical vision.

Procles' First Speech (*Hell.* 6.5.38–48)

In his first speech Procles begins by laying out arguments based on hard-nosed realism. Sidestepping any reference to the idealizing, justice-based arguments that have so far been raised by the Lacedaemonian ambassadors (and received with some scepticism by the Athenians),²⁴ Procles frames his case in terms of expediency. By

²² The historical Procles is a rather shadowy figure. We know only that he was an oligarch and a friend of Agesilaus (*Hell.* 5.3.13), through whom Xenophon perhaps made his acquaintance. For Phlius in this period, cf. Legon (1967) and Cartledge (1987), 262–6.

²³ In Tuplin's opinion, for example, the first speech is 'merely a competent manipulation of a rather unpromising brief' (1993: 112).

²⁴ They mentioned Athenian and Spartan common action in the Persian Wars, Sparta's averting of Athens' destruction at the close of the Peloponnesian War, and oaths that oblige the Athenians to give assistance (6.5.33–6). 'Not because the Lacedaimonians had acted unjustly' were the Arcadians campaigning against them, but because they had defended their ally from an attack made in violation of oaths (6.5.36).

lending assistance the Athenians will be helping themselves as much as the Spartans, since the Thebans desire to rule over all the Greeks (6.5.38, cf. 39), and Athens will be their first target once Sparta is out of the way (6.5.39). It would be far worse to have the Thebans as an enemy on the doorstep, than it was to have enemies far away, as previously. More expedient (*συμφορώτερον*) for the Athenians would be to give assistance while others still remain to fight on their side, rather than to wait until potential allies have perished and 'be compelled to fight to the end alone against the Thebans' (*ἀν . . . μόνοι ἀναγκάζοισθε διαμάχεσθαι πρὸς τοὺς Θηβαίους*, 6.5.39).

These claims about the Thebans are made more credible to the reader by their confirmation in the preceding narrative. In an invasion narrative that recalls Herodotean and Thucydidean models, the Thebans have been drawn along by promises that the conquest of Laconia will be possible and even easy, in view of the enemy's small numbers, not that it is the right thing to do (6.5.23, 25); and subsequently, despite the huge size of their army, at the first sign of serious Spartan resistance the Thebans leave for easier targets (6.5.31–2). Xenophon's strategy of relating speech and narrative itself exploits a technique familiar from Herodotus and Thucydides. Moreover, the way in which Xenophon's portrait of the Thebans stands in the tradition of both predecessors' narratives lends further authority to Procles' assertions.

After pointing to these good reasons for fear should the Athenians fail to help, Procles explicitly addresses an ill-grounded fear (*εἰ δέ τις φοβούνται . . .*): that the Spartans might cause trouble in the future; for one ought to fear those one has harmed, not those one has helped, in the event of their gaining great power (*μέγα δυνασθῶσιν* 6.5.40).

Disregarding concerns of justice and morality, and assuming (in subjects and audience) motives of power, profit, and fear, Procles' rhetorical manoeuvre, along with the vocabulary in which it is expressed, recalls Thucydidean speakers.²⁵ With good reason Procles' two speeches have been judged the most Thucydidean in vocabulary

²⁵ Cf. e.g. Diodotus in the Mytilenean Debate (3.42–8) and the Athenians in the Melian Dialogue, who explicitly set aside arguments in terms of justice so as to focus on what will be expedient for the Athenians. Procles' remarks resonate also with Diodotus' advocacy of leniency now in a bid to elicit better behaviour in future (3.47), and the Athenians' observation at Melos of the danger for rulers should their subjects attain power (5.91.1). The Melian episode ultimately demonstrated one's

and expression of all the speeches of *Hellenica*.²⁶ At the same time, this display of the consequences of an Athenian refusal to help the Spartans in the face of the Theban attack might well prompt Procles' listeners—and Xenophon's readers—to think back to an earlier 'hinge of history', and its presentation in Herodotus: the way in the Persian Wars Athens (as here) held in her palm the issue of the freedom of Greece. Herodotus in a famous counterfactual observed that had the Athenians been *fearful* and abandoned their country, or gone over to Xerxes, the Spartans would have been *deserted by their allies, and have fought alone, and fighting alone*, they would have done great deeds and then nobly perished, or themselves have gone over to Xerxes. Either way, the Persians would have subdued Greece. In resolving to join other Greeks in fighting Persia, the Athenians chose that Greece remain free (Hdt. 7.139).²⁷ In underscoring the dire significance of the moment—the fact that the Athenians once again hold Greek freedom in their hands—Procles' counterfactual scenario has a direct argumentative function, but it serves also to set this moment in the context of the wider historiographical tradition, as equally worthy of being recounted.

The next stage of the speech deals with friendship. The Athenians should consider that 'it is fitting for both private citizens and poleis to acquire a good thing (*κτᾶσθαι... τι ἀγαθόν*), when they are strongest, in order that if ever they became powerless, they may draw aid from their previous toils'; and the gods have given them the opportunity to help the Spartans and so 'to acquire them for all time as friends who will plead no excuses' (*κτησασθαι τούτους εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον φίλους ἀπροφασίστους*, 6.5.41). Thus the 'good thing' (*τι ἀγαθόν*) that is a desirable acquisition for cities and individuals achieves concrete form as long-lasting *φίλοι ἀπροφάσιστοι*. The structure of the speech thus far—moving from discussion of *to sympheron* to *philia*—reinforces what is here

fear of those one has mistreated: Xenophon at *Hell.* 2.2.3 described the Athenians' fears as they reflected back on Melos and expected to suffer a similar fate. Soulis (1972), 159–61 lists further similarities between Procles' first speech and various Thucydidean speeches.

²⁶ Soulis (1972), 165. However Soulis looks for no explanation aside from Xenophon's inability to construct a political speech and consequent willy-nilly appropriation of Thucydidean phrases.

²⁷ The notion reappears in Chileus of Tegea's warning of the risk for the Spartans should the Athenians medize (9.9). Thucydides' Athenians at 1.74.4 reiterate the counterfactual of Hdt. 7.139.

implicit: that friendship is the most expedient commodity. Procles is in fact suggesting that the Spartans will be to Athens what the Phliasians are to Sparta: the small city thus shows the way for the proper behaviour of big cities. Changing tack in this way, the speech contests Thucydides' emphasis on the explanatory power of expediency over against justice and ethics, by spotlighting the importance and expediency of friendship—which has the potential to transform power relations, by aiding the powerless. *Φίλους ἀπροφασίστους* is perhaps a nod in Thucydides' direction, and an implicit challenge: friendship is strong enough to forestall discussion of *prophaseis* and so render them irrelevant to historical outcomes.

Procles next asserts that there will be numerous witnesses of Sparta's good treatment at Athens' hands: the gods who see all things, present and future; allies and enemies; Greeks and barbarians; for 'to no one are such things a matter of indifference' (6.5.42): absolutely everyone has a stake in this question of whether a good deed is reciprocated. If the Spartans should prove base in relation to the Athenians, no one else would become devoted to them ever again; and they are especially likely to be virtuous, in view of their striving for praise and avoidance of disgrace (6.5.42). Thus Procles turns to ethical concerns with the idea of the entire world watching as witnesses (*μαρτύρων*, 6.5.41), with their opinion and praise dependent on perceiving ethically admirable action. The Spartans can prove *ἄνδρες ἀγαθοί* (6.5.43) and thus secure their reputation—their *kleos*—in this way, then, rather than by acts of heroic prowess in war.²⁸ Conversely 'shameful deeds' (*αἰσχρῶν . . . ἔργων*) here denote not acts of cowardice such as readers might most readily recall from the history of the previous century (like that of the two Spartans at Thermopylae who did *not* die and were shamed on returning to Sparta (Hdt. 7.229–31), or the startling capitulation of the Spartans on Pylos (Thuc. 4.38, 40)),²⁹ but failures to reciprocate friendship.³⁰

²⁸ The contrast is crystallized when Procles subsequently uses *ἄνδρες ἀγαθοί* in its traditional sense, of the bravery of Spartans together with Athenians in the Persian Wars (6.5.13). On the development from the later 5th cent. of the idea of virtue as excellence of character see e.g. Hedrick (2009).

²⁹ Closer to Xenophon is Herodotus' presentation of the Spartans' shameful desire to re-establish tyranny at Athens (5.92), and more generally his bringing into question their reputation for ousting tyrants: cf. Baragwanath (2008), 89–95.

³⁰ Readers might rather think back to Sparta's shameful treatment of Plataea, breaking the oaths they had sworn to protect her, and, indeed, spurning the friendship (cf. *φίλτατοι*, Thuc. 3.59.2) the Plataeans had shown the Spartan dead.

This emphasis on ethical achievement is next set against the background of the conventional (Homeric and Herodotean) idea of *kleos* achieved primarily through prowess on the battlefield, with Procles' additional arguments that recall the Persian War and Thermopylae in particular:

If ever again danger should come to Greece from the barbarians, in whom would you trust more than in the Lacedaemonians (τίσιν ἂν μάλλον πιστεύσαιτε ἢ Λακεδαιμονίοις)? Whom would you make fellow fighters with more delight (ᾗδιον) than these, who posted at Thermopylae all chose (εἵλοντο) by fighting to die rather than live and admit the barbarian into Greece? (6.5.43)

Striking here is the persisting focus on ethics and character rather than exclusively military prowess. Procles' observation that the Spartans are to be *trusted* (πιστεύσαιτε) embraces the notion of trusting in their fighting ability, but points also to broader, moral qualities.³¹ It is the ethically admirable *choice* (cf. εἵλοντο) to fight and die, rather than the quality of fighting displayed, that Procles highlights as the significance of Thermopylae (and this in fact resonates with Herodotus' presentation of Thermopylae as the upshot of Leonidas' personal choice).³² The very selection of Thermopylae—a military defeat, even as it could be envisaged as a moral victory³³—over, for example, the victory at Plataea, sustains Procles' ethical focus, as well as avoiding any thoughts of the Peloponnesian War. Notable too is Procles' focus not simply on deeds achieved, but on the disposition of potential allies vis-à-vis the Spartans: the attitude of trust and 'delight' (cf. ᾗδιον) in serving alongside them that the Spartans should inspire, and (as Procles goes on to observe) the hope that the Athenians can have that they will prove brave men again.

Procles next articulates the idea of justice directly and emphatically in a rhetorical question ('Is it not just that both you and we should

³¹ Indeed, it looks forward to Procles' ensuing remarks on the *πιστότης* in the sense of 'loyalty' of Sparta's allies (πιστοί, 6.5.44; τοὺς πιστοτάτους φίλους, 6.5.45) (and conversely the 'shame' they would feel at not returning favours: αἰσχύνοντ' ἂν μὴ ἀποδιδόντες χάριτας, 6.5.44).

³² Cf. also Thucydides on Mantinea: though far inferior to their opponent in terms of skill (τῇ ἐμπειρίᾳ), the Spartans' superiority in courage (τῇ ἀνδρείᾳ, 5.72.2) secures their victory (and wipes out charges of cowardice being levelled by the Greeks: 5.75.2).

³³ See Dillery (1996), 237–45 on Herodotus' portrayal of Thermopylae as a moral victory.

provide help to them, since these men proved brave together with you, and there is hope that they will be so again?' 6.5.43), adding an oblique reminder that the Phliasians (the 'we' of the 'you and we') for their part have indeed behaved justly in displaying steadfast loyalty to Sparta even in adversity.³⁴

Procles now develops in a different direction his argument that ethical qualities are more important than military prowess (for the implicit reason that military prowess counts for nothing if one cannot be relied upon), observing that the allied poleis will no longer seem small if Athens is added to their number. Thus friendship and alliances determine the very size of cities, compensating for an individual city's weakness. The notion here of 'small cities becoming great' recalls Herodotus 1.5, and again contests its assumptions: traditional notions of bigness, determined by size and resources, take second place to the more crucial issue of friendship (even as the line of reasoning remains materialistic). As well as developing Procles' point, this argument implicitly contests traditional historiographical emphases on greatness, and justifies a different variety of historiography: one that better appreciates the significance of relationships, and how they may render surface appearances misleading.³⁵ The historiographically self-conscious presentation reflects back too on Procles' earlier remark (at 6.5.42) that the question of whether a good deed is reciprocated is of keen interest to all. It comes to seem charged on a further level, as an assertion of the worth and interest more broadly of Xenophon's kind of historiography.

In the remainder of the speech, the spotlight on reputation is trained on the Athenians. 'From hearsay' (*ἀκούων, ἥκουον*) Procles used to admire Athens for its reputation for giving refuge to those who'd been wronged; whereas now he himself 'sees with his own eyes' (*αὐτὸς ἦδη . . . ὁρῶ*) the most famous Spartans and their most loyal friends present at Athens asking for assistance, and the Thebans requesting that the Athenians allow those who once saved them to

³⁴ 'Moreover, it is worth your while to show the Lacedaemonians goodwill for the sake of the allies: for the very ones who remained loyal to the Spartans in adversity would be most ashamed not to return favours.'

³⁵ This represents a challenge also to the more cynical assumptions about human nature that underlie Thucydidean historical explanation (and, to a lesser extent, Herodotean—for Herodotus can occasionally envisage selfless/ideal motives). Compare e.g. Xenophon's emphasis (cf. n. 25 above) on the Athenians' fear—ultimately unfounded—that they would suffer the same punishment as they had inflicted on the Melians.

perish (6.5.45).³⁶ Athens' ancestors did a fine deed in burying the corpses of the seven against Thebes, he argues, but it would be finer still to allow the living Spartans not to be treated with hubris or to perish (6.5.46). And while it was a fine deed when the Athenians checked the hubris of Eurysthenes and saved the sons of Heracles, it would be finer still if they should save not just the founders, but the entire polis (6.5.47). Both these mythical examples highlight not only military success, but also the ethically admirable behaviour of righting impieties and checking hubris. Commentators observe that the same examples appear in Isocrates;³⁷ but the Persian Wars and Herodotean resonances of Procles' speech point to an even more significant point of contact. These same arguments appear in this same sequence on the lips of the Athenians in their *agon* with the Tegeans as to who should take the second wing (to the Spartans on the left) at the battle of Plataea (Hdt. 9.27), the major Persian Wars battle in which the Athenians and Spartans (along with Phliasians and others) did indeed share the same battle line. It may be significant that Procles avoids what in Herodotus' account was the Athenians' central argument, about their more militaristic and also *individual* achievement at Marathon. They there boasted: '*we alone* of the Greeks fought in single combat against the Persian ...' (9.27.5).³⁸

The speech culminates in the idea of giving back *charis* for the Spartans' bravery in the past. 'The finest of all deeds', Procles asserts, 'would be—since the Lacedaemonians saved you then with a vote, void of danger—if you now should save them with arms and through danger' (6.5.47). It would also be *manifestly* noble if after being many times both friends and enemies of the Lacedaemonians, the Athenians should

recall not what you have suffered rather than the benefits you have received, and return the favour (χάριν ἀποδοίητε) not on behalf of yourselves alone, but on behalf of all Greece, because on her behalf the Spartans proved brave men (ἀνδρες ἀγαθοί). (6.5.48)

³⁶ In view of the metatextually charged presentation, does the shift from *akoue* to *opsis* recall and gain emphasis from Herodotus?

³⁷ e.g. Underhill (1900), *Comm. ad loc.*

³⁸ Cf. Thucydides' Athenians at 1.73.4 ('at Marathon we alone braved the first danger'). Nor could Procles' emphasis be further from that of Thucydides' Athenians at 1.75–6, who in justifying their acquisition of empire underscored the compulsion exercised upon them by concerns of fear, honour, and self-interest, and disallowed pleas to justice.

Not by traditional heroism, but by reciprocating favours more generously than the code of reciprocity requires—repaying salvation *by salvation involving risk*, and remembering only Sparta's good deeds—Athens can perform a most noble action that will restore her reputation. Rather than *ignoring* the fact of Sparta and Athens' troubled relationship in previous history (as did the Spartan ambassadors earlier), Procles calls upon the Athenians to show their magnanimity by focusing only on the good. Friendship is a quality, then, that can trump even the most destructive episodes. The expansion of reference to 'all of Greece' as the representative of this favour recalls the idea of *everyone watching* and *implicated*, but also points in the direction of a pan-Greek Herodotean project, rather than the bipolar Thucydidean schema. At the same time Xenophon's presentation seems to suggest a challenge to the more precisely reciprocal structural and explanatory model of Herodotus' *Histories*.³⁹

Procles' combination of expediency and ethics persuades the Athenians, who in their deliberations will not admit any contrary views, and vote to go to Sparta's aid 'in full force' (6.5.48). Thus he updates the arguments of Thucydidean speakers who notoriously fail to achieve such a combination,⁴⁰ or who (like Diodotus) explicitly avoid making the attempt.

The idealistic vision of Procles' speech becomes all the more conspicuous against the background of failed action that follows: thanks to mediocre leadership, the Athenians arrive in Sparta too late to make a difference. Most of the enemy has wandered off, with their supplies dwindling and winter coming on, and the Thebans have returned home 'as they pleased' (6.5.52). In any case, the speech could scarcely have affected the historical outcome, since Cleiteles had already persuaded the Athenians that they ought to lend assistance because of the Thebans' violation of oaths (6.1.37). But Procles' arguments betray a startling accord with Xenophon's own broader philosophy of human relations and ideal leadership, with its emphasis on ethical qualities and *philia*. Was this speech then included as the statement of an ideal that is important to Xenophon in other ways?

³⁹ On reciprocity as the *Histories*' key structuring (and thematic) device see Gould (1989) and (1991), Lateiner (1989), ch. 9.

⁴⁰ e.g. the Plataeans or Melians, or Cleon—whose failed attempt to combine his argument from expediency with justice Thucydides unmasks: Macleod (1983a), cf. n. 25 above; Pelling, Ch. 11 in this volume.

Procles' Second Speech (*Hell.* 7.1.2–11)

The possibility becomes more alluring in light of Procles' second speech, which addresses the question of the division of leadership between Sparta and Athens in their newly brokered alliance. Procles lays out the case (which mirrors the provisional decision of the Athenian council) for sharing leadership on a complementary principle: Sparta leading on land, Athens on sea. The idea attracts temporary consensus, until the Athenians are instead persuaded by Cephisodotus' narrow argument (7.1.12–14) that they are being deceived by any agreement that does not entail a division into *identical* parts. The speech thus contributes nothing to the final decision, and indeed there are grounds for wondering whether such a speech—ignoring the elephant in the room, the Thebans—is historically plausible, or largely Xenophon's own creation.⁴¹ But it is significant in other ways. It stands as a monument of a particular historical vision and an ideal of state relations,⁴² and draws even more explicitly on the historiographical tradition.

Procles opens his address as follows:

Ἐπείπερ, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ἀγαθὸν ὑμῖν ἔδοξεν εἶναι Λακεδαιμονίους φίλους ποιεῖσθαι, δοκεῖ μοι χρῆναι τοῦτο σκοπεῖν, ὅπως ἡ φιλία ὅτι πλείστον χρόνον συμμενεῖ. ἐὰν οὖν ἢ ἑκατέροις μάλιστα συνοίσει, ταύτῃ καὶ τὰς συνθήκας ποιησώμεθα, οὕτω κατὰ γὰρ τὸ εἰκὸς μάλιστα συμμένοιμεν ἄν. τὰ μὲν οὖν ἄλλα σχεδὸν τι συνωμολόγηται, περὶ δὲ τῆς ἡγεμονίας νῦν ἡ σκέψις. (7.1.2)

Men of Athens, since you have decided that it is a good thing to make the Lacedaemonians friends, it seems to me that it is necessary to consider this, how friendship is to endure for the longest time. If we make an agreement on terms which will be most expedient to each side, it is likely that it will endure most of all. Everything else is practically agreed, so now the consideration is about leadership.

Procles thus sets out a probability argument based on a Thucydidean premise: an arrangement that is most expedient (*συνοίσει*) to both

⁴¹ Cf. e.g. Soulis (1972), 161 ('The detailed analysis of the speech shows that it was invented by Xen. . . . Procles is made to say almost nothing about his country and the Spartan allies').

⁴² Gray (1989), 113–21 views Procles' speeches as monuments of *Athenian* ethical achievement (since he appeals to the Athenians' magnanimous character). While it is true that the Athenians' response (initially warm, but then persuaded by Cephisodotus' less gracious proposal) reflects on their character, the speeches are more broadly targeted than just at the Athenians.

sides will be likely to last longest. Again in closing his speech, he will remark that he has said what he believes to be most advantageous (*συμφορώτατα*, 7.1.11) to both parties. The overall focus on state relations and treaties is also Thucydidean in spirit, as is Procles' précis of the issue on the table as hegemony (*περὶ δὲ τῆς ἡγεμονίας*)—though that topic is important in Herodotus too.

Procles develops his argument by pointing out that Athens' position makes her naturally suited to leadership by sea,⁴³ for the states that depend on it lie near her, and are weaker than her; she has harbours, 'without which it is not possible to have naval power', many triremes, and the custom of adding continuously to the fleet (*ναυτικὸν ἐπικτᾶσθαι*, 7.1.3); and all the naval arts she possesses as her own (*οἰκείας ἔχετε*). Athenians far surpass others (*πολὺν πρόεχετε*) in experience (*ἐμπειρία*) of naval matters since they gain their very livelihoods from it. From no other port could so many triremes sail at once; 'and this is important (*οὐκ ἐλάχιστον*) in relation to leadership (*πρὸς ἡγεμονίαν*), for everyone most gladly joins forces with the power that is first to display its strength' (7.1.4). That Athens' devotion (*ἐπιμέλεια*) to the sea is both necessary and fitting (*ἀναγκαία καὶ προσήκουσα*) is evident in her many sea victories and few defeats,⁴⁴ but equally in the fact that when she was ultimately defeated by sea, defeat was total (*παντελῶς*): 'thus it was clear in these things that all your safety depended on the sea' (7.1.6). The second half of Procles' speech presents a complementary batch of arguments for Sparta being equally well suited to land campaigns (7.1.8–11).⁴⁵

Procles' abstract analysis, with its focus on *hegemonia* and *dynamis*, expressed in possession (cf. *ἔχετε, κέκτησθε, ἐπικτᾶσθαι*) of harbours and triremes along with naval expertise, and likewise much of the vocabulary and expression (e.g. litotes) is distinctly

⁴³ *τόπον ἔχετε κάλλιστα πεφυκότα πρὸς τοῦτο* (7.1.3), cf. with reference to Athens' seafaring nature: *οὕτως οὖν πεφυκότων* (7.1.7).

⁴⁴ Of the 'many and very great contests' by sea, *ἐλάχιστα μὲν ἀποτετυχήκατε, πλείστα δὲ κατωρθώκατε* (7.1.5).

⁴⁵ Recognizing this reality, the Spartans train from childhood for war on land. In several respects they are pre-eminent in land campaigns (e.g. in setting forth in greatest numbers and with greatest speed); and the god gives them luck in this sphere—for they have failed in the fewest such campaigns (*ἐλάχιστα μὲν ἐσφαλμένοι εἰσὶ*), but won many victories (*πλείστα δὲ κατωρθώκοτες*, 7.1.9). The results suggest that their devotion to land is no less necessary (*ἀναγκαία οὐδὲν ἥττον*) than Athens' to the sea.

Thucydidean.⁴⁶ The argument about Athens' superiority on sea has affinities to that of the Athenians at Thucydides 1.73–4,⁴⁷ and relates especially to Pericles' explanation of Athenian sea power and skill at sea (1.142–3). Pericles takes Athens' harbours for granted in his speech, but Thucydides has offered a vivid picture of their construction and an assessment of their importance (1.90–3). The idea of Athens' *natural* suitability for leadership by sea has affinities with Thucydides' exploration of the *physis* of states. Yet Procles also goes beyond Thucydides' account of Athens' *dynamis* as resting on sea power and quantities of ships, to offer a further explanation in terms of human psychology and the disposition of the ruled, of how the ability to launch many triremes at once is conducive to leadership (7.1.4). This heralds a new direction in the argument, with Procles' observation that as a result of Athens' numerous naval victories and few (if total) defeats, 'it is likely that the allies would most gladly (ῥῆδιστα) share in danger with us' (7.1.5). In this way he again spotlights the importance of the allies' perspective, which comes out further in his later comment about Sparta: her excellence in land engagements makes it likely that allies join her 'with the greatest confidence' (εὐθαρσεστάτους). Xenophonic too is the detail that most crucial of all (τὸ πλείστου δὲ ἄξιον) is obedience to one's leaders—with Athens best at this on sea as is Sparta on land.⁴⁸ With *axion* here (that buzzword in the historians' methodological discourse: cf. pp. 318–19 above), the comment at the same time perhaps affirms, on another level, the worth of considering in historiographical accounts this matter of obedience—which is indeed an essential component in all Xenophon's studies of leadership. Again,

⁴⁶ It seems especially reminiscent of the Archaeology and Pentecontaetia. There are possible echoes too of Athens' portrait in Pericles' Funeral Oration, e.g. the Athenians' possession of naval arts 'as their own' (οἰκείας ἔχετε, 7.1.4), cf. Athens' consumption of imports 'with enjoyment as her own' (οἰκειοτέρα τῇ ἀπολαύσει, Thuc. 2.38); and see comments on self-sufficiency below, pp. 336–9.

⁴⁷ The Athenians claim that in the Persian Wars, they were unable to defend themselves on land (1.73.4), whereas the Spartans were not equipped to fight on sea (1.74.3); they emphasize the importance of Salamis and thus their own defining role in determining the war's outcome, since 'the fortunes of the Greeks lay in the ships', and it was they who provided the ablest commander, the most ships, and unshrinking zeal (1.74.1).

⁴⁸ Once again, this is a matter not of stark difference but of increased emphasis in Xenophon; and obedience is historically a quality associated with Sparta. Thucydides for example has Brasidas observe that the soldier's three virtues are freedom, respect, and obedience (τὸ τοῖς ἄρχουσι πείθεσθαι, 5.9).

in reflecting on Athenian and Spartan training and *epimeleia* and lifestyles, Procles uses much the same language as Thucydides' Pericles (at 1.142–3), but to make the opposite point: he counters Pericles' assumption of the supremacy of naval power by highlighting the equal advantage of power on land. Likewise his vision of a complementary relationship between Athens and Sparta represents an implicit challenge to Pericles' notion of Athenian exceptionalism (based exclusively on sea power).

But the speech is equally remarkable for its Herodotean affinities, above all in the way that Procles stands in the tradition of the *Histories'* wise advisers. Herodotus' well-known wise adviser figures⁴⁹ serve in his narrative to highlight the importance of a moment and bring out its significance—especially in the case of ignored warnings, which precipitate disaster—but they can also to point to broader truths about historical processes and the human condition. Procles—from the tiny town singled out by Xenophon for its steadfast loyalty to Sparta—is ideally placed to advise on the question at issue here, of leadership and state relations. The choice of Procles also allows the advice to stand as an ideal in the way that a better-known speaker from one of the major poleis would not. Phlius was a loyal ally of Sparta, but equally had fought on behalf of all of Greece in the Persian Wars, contributing 200 troops to the Thermopylae campaign (Hdt. 7.202, cf. Paus. 10.20.1) and an impressive 1,000 to the pan-Greek battle of Plataea (Hdt. 9.28). Perhaps its very location in the north-east Peloponnese, about equidistant from Sparta and Athens, made it an ideal choice for Xenophon's purposes.⁵⁰

Like the advice of many Herodotean wise advisers, and of another warner figure in *Hellenica*, Prothous,⁵¹ Procles' advice is not taken, and the wider narrative of *Hellenica* leaves the impression that there was little possibility that such a vision could ever have come to pass. But the contrast with the surrounding narrative makes it all the more of a striking set-piece and exemplum, and as a serious ideal, it matches the ideals Xenophon sets forth in other works. Procles' speech signals the significance of this moment of history, and of the

⁴⁹ Bischoff (1932), Lattimore (1939), Stahl (1975).

⁵⁰ Compare how in the only extant epinician for a victor of Phlius, Bacchylides 9, the victor and Phlius itself 'are pan-Hellenically established as paradigms of true Greekness': Fearn (2003), 348.

⁵¹ Dillery (1995), 146 with n. 20 observes that Prothous (at *Hell.* 6.4.2) is a Herodotean warner figure.

question at issue: that of the relationship between, and variety of leadership to be exercised by, two of the major powers. Xenophon thus draws attention to a lost opportunity, or rather, a hypothetical picture of an ideal state of affairs: a more generous-spirited relationship between Athens and Sparta, on a complementary basis, that might have been more effective in promoting stability (and countering Thebes) in the fourth century.

Beyond the general wise-adviser form, the speech contains echoes of Herodotus' most famous wise adviser, Solon, who in one of the *Histories'* best-known episodes lectured Croesus about human happiness. The encounter between Athenian sage and Lydian king is chronologically impossible; but Herodotus appropriated and reshaped the figure of Solon to voice important other truths. Solon's stories of Tellus, and Cleobis and Biton, who appropriate Croesus' place in the happiness stakes, and his astonishing feat of calculation, underscored the likelihood of change over time and the consequent instability of human fortune. As Solon summarized in his famous concluding dictum, 'one must consider the end of every affair, in what way it turns out' (σκοπέειν δὲ χρὴ παντὸς χρήματος τὴν τελευτήν, κῆ ἀποβήσεται). Procles' opening words echo this very line verbally and structurally (δοκεῖ μοι **χρῆναι** τοῦτο **σκοπεῖν**, **ὅπως** ἡ φιλία ὅτι πλείστος χρόνον συμμενεῖ (7.1.2)), and with the Herodotean δοκεῖ μοι.⁵² The linguistic echo is suggestive, and a further invitation to reflect on the possibility that Xenophon's shaping of Procles' discourse owes something to the Herodotean Solon.

Solon's focus is the agreed human good of happiness (ὄλβος/εὐδαιμονίη)—what this condition is for an individual, and the circumstances under which it may endure over time. Xenophon shifts this focus from the individual's good to the city's, defining happiness as enduring friendships with other cities: thus the problem under discussion is that of maintaining friendship between states. Procles first affirms that friendship (*philia*) with Sparta has been agreed by the Athenians to be a good thing (ἀγαθόν), and then sets about examining how such friendship might endure over the longest possible time (πλείστον χρόνον συμμενεῖ, 7.1.2). Sceptical audience comments in advance of Procles' first speech had already drawn attention to this problem of maintaining positive state relations over

⁵² Cf. Marincola (1989).

time.⁵³ The shift from Solon's concern with individuals to states had also been played out there,⁵⁴ and in fact had been implicit already in Herodotus, who applied Solon's principle of changing individual fortunes to the fortunes of cities in his remarks on the likelihood of big and little cities swapping status over time (1.5.4) and in his depiction of the Persian Empire.⁵⁵

This issue of maintaining cordial relationships between states was of acute relevance in the turbulent world of the fourth century, as well as being of particular interest to Xenophon. Indeed as adviser himself of the Athenians in *Poroi*, Xenophon sets out a vision that has close affinities to Procles': *Poroi* culminates with consideration of a city's happiness, on the agreed assumption that such happiness consists in enduring peace with other states.⁵⁶ Xenophon's slate of proposals aims to combine prosperity and safety (which depends in large part on other states' friendly disposition toward Athens⁵⁷): its adoption would make the city 'happy in security' (μετ' ἀσφαλείας εὐδαιμονοῦσαν) (6.1).

Another Herodotean/Solonian element in Procles' speech is the god's presence ordaining men's affairs.⁵⁸ The division of leadership on land and sea arises from divine ordering (θεία φύσει τε καὶ τύχῃ, 'by divine nature and chance'). The gods are responsible for Athens' good luck in seafaring (7.1.5: ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν δέδοται ὑμῖν εὐτυχεῖν ἐν τούτῳ, etc.), and equally it is 'the deity' (ὁ θεός) who eventually grants Sparta a sea-victory (7.1.6), more generally secures their luck (εὐτυχεῖν) in their land engagements, and enables them to

⁵³ When the Spartan ambassadors mentioned Sparta's good deeds vis-à-vis Athenians and others in the past, 'a rumour went around to the effect that this is what they are saying now, but when they were doing well, they waged war on us' (6.5.35).

⁵⁴ Procles drew an explicit parallel between individuals and cities: both alike should accumulate a stock of favours when they are strongest, so that 'if ever they become powerless', they may draw aid (6.5.40). Here, too, in the background is the idea of change over time.

⁵⁵ Cf. Harrison (2000), 47: 'It is no longer merely a question of personal fortune, good or bad. The whole Persian empire is on a Polycratean roll of good fortune, which it is Xerxes' duty to maintain.'

⁵⁶ 'Presumably, those poleis which continue in peace for the longest time (αἱ ἂν πλείστον χρόνον ἐν εἰρήνῃ διατελώσι) are reckoned most happy (εὐδαιμονέσται)', *Poroi* 5.1.

⁵⁷ Xenophon's advice will enable the Athenians to be more beloved (προσφιλέστεροι) by the Greeks, to live more securely (ἀσφαλέστερον), and to be more glorious (6.1).

⁵⁸ Solon depicts a jealous and disruptive deity overseeing mortal affairs (1.32.1, cf. 1.32.9).

‘stumble least of all (ἐλάχιστα . . . ἐσφαλμένοι εἰσί), but to win many victories’ (7.1.9). In like fashion Herodotus’ Solon had underscored the crucial role of god and luck in human affairs. They alone may shield human beings from their propensity to disaster, mitigating the bleak reality that ‘the whole of man is chance’ (πάν ἐστὶ ἄνθρωπος συμφορή, Hdt. 1.32.5). Thus in both Xenophon and Herodotus we find shared semantics of εὐτυχία and συμφορά. This theme is sustained to the end of Procles’ speech, with his exhortation that the Athenians ‘be lucky’ (εὐτυχοῖτε) in arriving at the best conclusion for all (7.1.11). But whereas in Herodotus, luck can appear (at least from the human perspective) to be an amoral force, separate from the gods, Xenophon presents a more morally invested, pious scheme: a scheme closer to that of traditional religion, in which the gods are themselves the vehicle of luck.⁵⁹

Procles’ scheme also mirrors (and develops on the level of cities) Herodotus’ Solon’s views on the impossibility of self-sufficiency: Solon observed that individuals cannot be entirely self-sufficient, ‘just as no land is fully sufficient (χώρη οὐδεμία καταρκέει) at producing everything for itself, but it has one thing and lacks another; whichever has the most (τὰ πλεῖστα), this land is the best (ἀρίστη)’ (1.32.8). Procles for his part argues that Athens, with the *most* (πλεῖσται) cities dependent on her, many triremes, and the *most* naval victories, is best equipped for leadership on sea, while Sparta, who fights and wins the most (πλεῖστους, πλεῖστα) land battles, and administers them best (ἄριστα) (7.1.11), is best suited for leadership on land. Thus he implies that neither is self-sufficient, but each has need of the other. Xenophon then appears to be presenting his key philosophy on Sparta and Athens and their ideal relationship as being informed by Solonian wisdom.

And yet this is only part of the story: for Thucydides had already engaged with Solonian ideas.⁶⁰ He had developed Herodotus’ Solonian wisdom by applying it on the level of states, depicting the

⁵⁹ A scheme closer indeed to that which surfaces in the historical Solon’s poetry. See Chiasson (1986), and more generally Harrison (2000), ch. 2.

⁶⁰ See Scanlon (1994) for how here and elsewhere Thucydides ‘used and elaborated upon certain crucial Herodotean themes of power and empire’ (p. 143). Cp. Szegedy-Maszak (1993), 203, agreeing that Thucydides’ views on Solon were probably indirect, via Herodotus and oral tradition. Szegedy-Maszak works on the premise that ‘motifs and slogans that are recognizably Solonian appear at a number of crucial places in [Thucydides’] narrative’ (1993), 202.

Spartans as its true inheritors.⁶¹ In Solon he had found a model for his depiction of Athenian democracy under Pericles, and particularly for Pericles' position within that democracy.⁶² Pericles in the Funeral Oration echoes the Solonian dictum of the impossibility of self-sufficiency,⁶³ only to turn it on its head, presenting Athens as most sufficient in herself (*αὐταρκεστάτην*, 2.36.3). So far from accepting Solon's wisdom that no city or individual can be self-sufficient, Pericles presents Athens as entirely so, in a vision that negates the very idea of the Greek community (replacing the Greek/barbarian dichotomy with that of Athens versus all other peoples).⁶⁴ Thucydides' wider narrative, however, hints at the defectiveness of such a notion: the bleak and tragic irony that 'no *σῶμά* (body/individual) proved sufficient (*αὐταρκες*)' (2.51.3) to combat the plague, whose narration follows on the heels of Pericles' words, undermines his optimism, and specifically the idea that an individual (*σῶμά*) could attain self-sufficiency via the power of the city of Athens.⁶⁵ The more optimistic vision of Xenophon's *Procles* seems a response in turn to Thucydides: it proposes a way forward through this very impasse, solving the problem of self-sufficiency on the level of states via a two-state solution (Athens–Sparta), on the basis (*pace*

⁶¹ Edmunds (1975), 81. Szegedy-Maszak (1993), 203 observes that Thucydides' identification of Spartan *eunomia* 'both as an antidote to civil strife and as a protection against tyranny' is 'strikingly close to the praise of *eunomia* composed by Solon'. Williams (1998), esp. 54–5, finds illustrations of Thucydides' key ethical concepts in the writings and deeds of Solon in particular among earlier thinkers.

⁶² Szegedy-Maszak (1993), cf. e.g. 209.

⁶³ Scanlon (1994), 147–8 lists the 'several verbal echoes' between Thuc. 2.41.1 and Hdt. 1.30–2, cf. Macleod (1983b), 151. Edmunds (1975), 83: 'Pericles' words sound like a reply to the Herodotean Solon', cf. Flashar (1969), 31. Scanlon (1994), 157–9 canvasses further points of contact between Solon's speeches in Herodotus and Pericles' Funeral Oration in the themes of chance, death, and happiness.

⁶⁴ Price (2001), 171–89. Cf. Loraux (1986), 153–4. *Pace* Scanlon (1994), who finds close alignment between Herodotus' Solon and Thucydides' Pericles, arguing for their shared commitment to a vision of *qualified* autarky—in Pericles' case, qualified most significantly by the exceptional beneficence that the Athenians show others (before Pericles' death). This argument is undermined by the fact that already under Pericles, the idea of Athens' beneficence to the international community is a fantasy: in his final speech Pericles likens Athens' empire to a tyranny (words that give the lie to the notion of the Athenians' dedication to benefiting others (2.40.4–5), if that is taken as applying to the Athenians' policy to allies; but it perhaps applies rather 'to the character of *individual* Athenians', Rusten (1989), *Comm. ad loc.*).

⁶⁵ On the echo of 2.41.1 (Funeral Speech) in 2.51.2–3 (plague): Macleod (1983b), 151 (noting that both passages look back to Hdt. 1.32.8–9), Rusten (1989), *Comm.* p. 159.

Thucydides: cf. n. 35 above) of the viability of genuine inter-state reciprocal beneficence. In this latter respect Xenophon is once again developing Herodotean/Solonian idea(l)s. Scanlon has drawn attention to the significance of the self-sacrifice Tellus, Cleobis, and Biton perform in giving up their lives for the state or family:

This self-sacrificing behaviour is of course a form of traditional archaic ἀρετή, but it may also be described as a demonstration of χάρις, a benefaction on behalf of others. It is therefore in a double sense that these three individuals have ended their lives εὐχαρίστως, both by showing favour and by having received it during their lives.⁶⁶

Procles' words leave the strong impression that Xenophon has translated this notion of *charis* on to the level of states.

Procles' vision of a complementary relationship (Athens leading on sea, Sparta on land), informed by the Herodotean Solon's notion of the impossibility of self-sufficiency, and harking back to the situation of the Persian Wars days, undeniably has political implications. Rather than full equality, the sharing of power should be based on the particular strengths of each side and on an idea of merit. Solon was an important figure in the fourth century, especially to oligarchic orators (who ingeniously used him and his imputed intentions in framing his laws to get around the written laws of the fourth-century democracy⁶⁷). But Solon's high profile in Xenophon's day also made him a natural figure for Xenophon to borrow from for more historiographical purposes: on a first level, to authorize Procles' wisdom; and beyond that, perhaps also to help define and authorize Xenophon's own literary/historiographical approach. For aside from his advisory function, Solon in the *Histories* articulates a philosophy of history that parallels and lends authority to Herodotus' own.⁶⁸ In Thucydides' *History* likewise, the expression of (in Edmunds's words) 'the interaction of gnome or techne and tyche, of their mutual limitations, which Thucydides found everywhere'⁶⁹ appears

⁶⁶ Scanlon (1994), 147.

⁶⁷ See Thomas (1994).

⁶⁸ For Herodotus' shaping of the views of the historical Solon, see Chiasson (1986). For the close alignment between the sentiments Herodotus attributes to Solon, and Herodotus' own belief (or at least programmatic/ explanatory principles that surface in the *Histories*), see Shapiro (1996) and Harrison (2000), 31–63. Redfield (1985), 102 described Solon as the 'alter-ego of Herodotus', cf. Thompson (2009), 73–4.

⁶⁹ Edmunds (1975), 212.

to be informed by (and gain authority from) distinctly Solonian wisdom. Solon's notions of inevitable human hubris and *ate* may well have helped Thucydides articulate his distinctive, pessimistic view of history and human progress.⁷⁰

Solon is indeed a figure in some ways parallel to another Athenian sage who above all other figures looms over Xenophon's entire *œuvre* and influences his philosophic history: Xenophon's mentor, the philosopher Socrates. In a similar vein Procles—spokesman of the ethics of Phlius—helps authorize the novel ethical and moral focus of Xenophon's historiography.

III. CONCLUSIONS

In the last chapters of the account of Mantinea—the dénouement (7.5) of the *Hellenica*—Xenophon evokes the opening of Thucydides' *History*, with its picture of the whole of Greece lining up on either side in this war. This however serves only to highlight how the outcome here was the *reverse* of people's expectations:

When these things had happened, the opposite occurred to what all men expected would be (τοῦναντίον ἐγεγένητο οὐδ' ἐνόμισαν πάντες ἄνθρωποι ἔσεσθαι). For given that nearly all of Greece (σχεδὸν ἀπάσης τῆς Ἑλλάδος) was gathered there and had stood with one side or the other, there was no one who did not think that, if a battle occurred, the victor would rule, while the defeated would be subject. (7.5.26)⁷¹

This picture of the whole world *expecting* a definitive outcome, in contrast to an outcome marked only by uncertainty, challenges the assumption implicit throughout Thucydides' *History* that one or the other side would win definitively. While the Peloponnesian War in some ways reached a definitive outcome, with victory for Sparta and

⁷⁰ For Solonian thought in Thucydides' *History*, see esp. Edmunds (1975), *passim*.

⁷¹ Thucydides began writing expecting that his war would be the most great and notable yet, inferring this from the extraordinary preparation on every side (παρασκευῇ τῇ πάσῃ; cf. Xenophon on the extensive preparations that culminated in Mantinea), and 'seeing that the whole Hellenic world was taking sides with one or other, some already, others planning to; for this upheaval was the greatest that had ever affected the Hellenes and a part of the barbarians, one might say even the majority of mankind' (καὶ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ἀνθρώπων, 1.1.2; cf. Xenophon's πάντες ἄνθρωποι).

defeat for Athens, subsequent history soon unravelled any such impression of conclusiveness. Appropriately, then, Xenophon's novel choice of narrative form in itself defies the notion that meaningful closure was coterminous with the war's end.⁷²

In placing this Thucydidean opening element at *Hellenica*'s close, the sense of a topsy-turvy new reality is replicated on the level of narrative form. Implied is perhaps that the Thucydidean (and beyond it, Herodotean) conception that 'one state will win' outright is old-fashioned and unsuited to this new world of shifting realities.⁷³ Just as the expectations of those gathered at Mantinea in Xenophon's text are undermined, so Thucydides' personal expectation that his war would be determinative was belied by subsequent history. In such a world, against such a background—and from the human perspective—*only* ethical ties/*philia* have any real meaning, and in a practical sense can supply any security; only moral strength (such as that displayed by Phlius) offers certainty; and hence the particular worth of focusing on questions of character and inner disposition.⁷⁴ With its ethical focus, Procles' idealizing Herodotean/Solonian/Socratic vision, which stands in tension with the profound sense of the absence of progress that is generated by the way *Hellenica* both starts and ends with Thucydides, proposes a way through the impasse. By contrast, from a higher, divine perspective, order remains: a truth that Xenophon brings out by drawing again on Herodotean/Solonian resonances. The god (ὁ θεός) oversees the outcome at Mantinea, ordering affairs in such a way that after the battle there is absolute balance between the two opposing forces (as Xenophon's syntax underlines: μὲν . . . δὲ . . .). The divine is thus a

⁷² Similarly in the narrative that follows the razing of Athens' walls at the end of the Peloponnesian War Xenophon implies that the Peloponnesians' expectations (cf. νομίζοντες, 2.2.23) that the day heralded freedom for Greece were unfounded. See Rood (2004b), 348–51 on this passage, which is closural in looking back to the beginning of *Thucydides'* narrative. Marincola (2005) underscores the importance of endings in establishing meaning in historiographical works.

⁷³ Cf. Dewald (2007), 93: 'Xenophon throughout the *Hellenica* writes of individual military commanders negotiating a world of unstable and shifting loyalties, in which the most pressing concern was often how to get the troops fed and paid. Properly read, his world points to and in part explains the coming of the Macedonians a scant generation later.' Hornblower (1995), 65 finds a reason for Thucydides' model not being favoured later in the fact that his war did *not* prove paradigmatic.

⁷⁴ Stadter (2009) examines the growing recognition on the part of 4th-cent. thinkers of the importance of character in politics.

force that affirms a balance, much as earlier at Mantinea it ordained an evenly balanced outcome for Thebans and Spartans (7.5.13), and in Procles' vision it affirmed the balance between leadership on land and sea (cf. 'by divine judgement' or similar). The ἀκρισία and παραχή that mark the end of the *Hellenica* (7.5.27) thus hold sway only from the human perspective.

Xenophon's evocation of predecessors' accounts lends intelligibility and enriches interpretation by inviting readers to perceive comparisons with earlier history. It also sets Xenophon's own history in the wider tradition, with the implication that what he recounts is just as significant; and it stages his historiographical awareness. Moments of intertextual resonance are commonly also moments for self-definition in contrast to predecessors. Herodotus and Thucydides each signify a distinctive style of historiography, and may be invoked for different purposes—and even against one another. Equally, however, Xenophon's response points to much common ground; and it is by employing both together that he defines the bounds and character of his own project. *Hellenica* represents a statement that the periods of both Persian and Peloponnesian Wars are important for understanding the events of the fourth century, and equally that both his predecessors' historiographical methods are essential in conveying that history to his readers; even as Xenophon's own contribution makes his history more useful in the contemporary fourth-century context. In the background of each of these historians, all the while, remains the powerfully influential spectre of Homer: the intellectual father in several key respects of Herodotus and Thucydides, and grandfather of Xenophon. As Nicolai well puts it, 'Xenophon returns in new forms to the κλέα ἀνδρῶν of which Homer had sung'.⁷⁵

Recognizing the twin influence of Herodotus and Thucydides, in combination of course with Xenophon's own original take, helps explain *Hellenica's* remarkable *poikilia*: its sustained combination of optimism and pessimism, of explicit analysis with implication through analogy, and its intertwining of sparse narration with the enhancement of historical events as paradigms. It helps explain also Xenophon's characteristic articulation through narrative of the fact that ethical factors, even as they bear exemplary value, are at the same

⁷⁵ Nicolai (2006), 703.

time crucial to historical outcomes. Xenophon's subtle invocation of both historians enriches his presentation of history and enhances the stature of *Hellenica* as a worthy successor. At the same time, Xenophon turns out to be an important ancient witness to the complicated relationship of Herodotus and Thucydides.

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Herodotus and Thucydides in Roman Republican Historiography

Iris Samotta

I. INTRODUCTION

Detecting the traces of the ancient Greek historians in the Latin literary texts of the republican period initially seems like a task that might best be accomplished by modern astronomical scientists. Like dark matter in the universe, the intertextual relations seem invisible and undetectable, deducable only from their gravitational effects on visible matter; moreover in our case the ‘visible matter’ is often found in the literature of later periods. This ‘invisibility’ formerly led many specialists in the field of *Quellenforschung* to the assumption that the Roman writers who did not mention the ancient Greek historians simply did not know or care about them. Nowadays we try to look deeper, since we acknowledge the fact that in most cases ancient historians habitually did not reveal their influences or sources.¹

Despite this change in attitude, it is still the generally accepted view that Herodotus and Thucydides shared a common fate in Roman republican historiography: they were both literary household names, but their works were not read.² This conclusion, which is difficult to substantiate with evidence, entails the view that Roman republican historiography did not lay any importance on the

¹ Cf. Marincola (1999); Marincola (2007), 1–9, Introduction; Feldherr (2009), 6–8; Batstone (2009); Lendon (2009).

² Cf. Murray (1972), 202; Hornblower (1995), 47; Nicolai (2006), 718–19.

connections or differences between the two historians. According to this view, Thucydides alone comes to life in the works of the late republican writer Sallust.³

I argue that if we look at republican historiography in a different way, a lengthy tradition of reliance on and response to Herodotus and Thucydides emerges. My method for achieving a credible reconstruction of the 'dark matter' available in its visible, but fragmentary and frequently controversial, context engages the techniques of 'thick description' originated by the British philosopher Gilbert Ryle and introduced into the field of ethnology and anthropology by Clifford Geertz.⁴ By contrast to 'thin description,' which in our case simply records proven references to Herodotus and Thucydides within the works of their Roman successors, 'thick description' is highly sensitive to context and is therefore able to recreate a plausible superstructure of the historiographical tradition.

II. GREEK HISTORIOGRAPHICAL INFLUENCE IN ROME BEFORE PYDNA

Two cataclysmic events mark the development of Roman republican historiography. From 168 BCE onwards, in the aftermath of the Roman victory over Perseus at Pydna, the scrolls of the Macedonian libraries found their way to Rome. Again, after the Sullan sack of Athens in 86 BCE, the libraries within the Athenian sphere of influence were plundered and transferred to Rome. However, we should keep in mind that some knowledge of Herodotus and Thucydides had certainly reached Rome previously via the Greek historians of Sicily and Magna Graecia and that this knowledge influenced the earliest Roman historiography.

It is widely acknowledged that Roman historiography started with Quintus Fabius Pictor.⁵ He was a senator of praetorian

³ Cf. Scanlon (1980).

⁴ Geertz (1995), 7–43.

⁵ He certainly was the first one to write historical narratives in prose, but Roman engagement with myth-historical topics can be traced back to the early dramatists such as Livius Andronicus and his *Odusia/Odyssia*, a translation of Homer's epic tale of homecoming into Latin Saturnian metre (c.240 BCE), and Naevius, who wrote historical dramas (e.g. *Romulus/Lupus*) and the epic *Bellum Punicum* about his first-hand experience of the First Punic War, following Livius Andronicus'

rank,⁶ and after the Roman defeat at Cannae in 216 BCE he was sent as an envoy to Delphi to consult the Pythian oracle.⁷ What we know of his military and diplomatic career during the Hannibalic War (218–201 BCE) indicates that he began writing his *Ῥωμαϊκά* after this, in the final phase of the war, or shortly after Hannibal's defeat.⁸

Fabius Pictor and his literary predecessors and contemporaries had one thing in common: a major Greek influence on both their style and selection of contents.⁹ He penned his *Ῥωμαϊκά* in Greek, which is not surprising, since his family had long been acquainted with Greek culture and civilization.¹⁰ There is no doubt that Fabius Pictor aimed primarily at an erudite Roman audience,¹¹ but he was compelled to compete with the Greek historians who had previously treated Roman history if he wanted to be read in the Greek communities of southern Italy and Sicily.¹² Most important, Greek was up to that point the only language of the historiographical genre in the Graeco-Roman space of literary experiences.¹³ Theodor Mommsen once called Fabius Pictor 'the Roman Herodotus',¹⁴ referring to him as the initiator of the Roman historiography written by the senatorial elite for their peers. In addition, I argue that

example also in Saturnian verses (c.235 BCE); cf. Warmington (1967), 2–43, 46–156; Walter (2004), 221–9; Wiseman (2007), 74–5; Flower (2009), 67–8; Clauss (2010), 465–70. The interest in transforming Roman history into a dramatic narrative culminated when Q. Ennius created the *Annales*, a hexametric epic spanning Roman history from the beginning up to his own times (c.180 BCE); the epic has survived in more than 600 fragments. Cf. Skutsch (1985), 70–141; Gildenhard (2003); Walter (2004), 258–79; Clauss (2010), 470–7.

⁶ Polyb. 3.9.4. Given the Roman senate's custom in the 3rd cent. BCE he must have been a magistrate of at least praetorian rank, cf. Frier (1979), 235. c.230/225 BCE he was an active participant in the Roman Ligurian (Plin. *Nat.* 10.71 = Fabius Pictor F 20 *FGrHist*) and Celtic (Eutr. 3.5 = Fabius Pictor F 19b *FGrHist*; Oros. 4.13.6–7 = Fabius Pictor F 19c *FGrHist*) campaigns.

⁷ Liv. 22.57.5, 23.11.1–6; Plut. *Fab. Max.* 18.3.

⁸ Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 7.71.1 (= Fabius Pictor F 13b *FGrHist*). Cf. Frier (1979), 237–9.

⁹ Livius Andronicus was presumably a native Greek, and his fellow dramatists Naevius and Ennius were born and raised in Campania and Calabria in southern Italy, i.e. Magna Graecia, cf. Albrecht (1994), 92–119.

¹⁰ Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 1.6.2; Cic. *Div.* 1.43. His uncle, N. Fabius Pictor (cos. 266; MRR I 201) was sent as an envoy to Ptolemy II Philadelphus in 273 BCE, cf. Val. Max. 4.3.9; Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 20.14.

¹¹ Cf. Jehne (1999), 115–16; Beck (2003); Blösel (2003).

¹² e.g. the 3rd-century Sicilian historians Philinus of Acragas (*FGrHist* 174), Diocles of Peparethus (*FGrHist* 820), and Timaeus of Tauromenium (*FGrHist* 566).

¹³ Cf. Gruen (1984), 253–5; Marincola (2009), 11; Dillery (2009), 83.

¹⁴ Mommsen (1879), 10 N. 25.

with Fabius Pictor a Roman for the first time composed in a truly Herodotean manner a time-spanning history with ethnographical and mythographical details. He constructed a *historia tripartita* whose three parts consisted of the mythographical *ktisis* (the founding history of Rome up to the first years of the Republic), a summarized account of the events between the times of the decemvirate (450 BCE) and the war against Pyrrhus (289–272 BCE) and a more detailed contemporary history from the times of the First Punic War (264 BCE) up to his own times (c.210 BCE).¹⁵

Nowadays we know that Fabius Pictor's *Ῥωμαϊκά* was not only a testimonial of the oral tradition that formed the core of the Roman public memory, but that he used a wide variety of written historical sources: of course he had access to the private archives of the *gens Fabia* (which led to a preponderance of the Fabian family's deeds in his Greek *Annales*),¹⁶ and to official Roman non-literary records such as the *Annales Pontificum*, but he also relied on the works of his Western Greek historiographical predecessors, who in turn were influenced by Herodotus and Thucydides as the embodiment of the classical Greek literary tradition.¹⁷

Before we take a deeper look into Fabius Pictor's work in order to search for possible traces of Herodotus and Thucydides, we must confirm that the third-century Sicilian authors knew and were engaged with classical Greek historiography. Two seminal papers¹⁸ have established meticulously the previously underestimated reception of the classical historians through late classical and Hellenistic

¹⁵ Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 1.6.2. Cf. Timpe (1972); Frier (1979), 227–53; Beck and Walter (2001), 55–61; Walter (2004), 229–55; Beck (2007), 260. Thirty years later Q. Ennius readopted the narrative tripartition in his epic *Annales*, excluding the First Punic War only out of reverence to Naevius' epic *Bellum Punicum*, cf. Albrecht (1994), 108.

¹⁶ Cic. *Div.* 1.43. Cf. Flower (2009), 68–75; Hölkeskamp (2004).

¹⁷ As for the Western Greek historians, we can assume their influence on Fabius Pictor only via later reconstructions of their interdependence. They were interested in Roman history as far as it concerned their own political or geographical perspective. Thus, they dealt mainly with the political shift of power in the area of Magna Graecia and Sicily, starting with the war against Pyrrhus (289–272 BCE) and concentrating on the First Punic War (264–241 BCE).

¹⁸ Murray (1972), who focuses his paper mostly on the Hellenistic authors of the Graeco-Persian-Egyptian-influenced Near East (205–10), therefore treating the Western Greek authors only casually, cf. Lenfant (2007); Dillery (2007); Hornblower (1995). Cf. Riemann (1967), 11–69; Wiseman (2007), 67–9.

times. From papyrological evidence of the last three centuries BCE¹⁹ and the manuscript tradition of the first three centuries AD²⁰ we now know that there was never a gap in the direct knowledge of their work, and that the Hellenistic authors wrote their histories in constant occupation with the works of Herodotus, Thucydides, and of course, Xenophon.²¹ Herodotus was mostly criticized by his successors, who tried to surpass his work by proving his facts wrong or ridiculing his methods or narratives.²² Because of a changed taste in rhetorical style and in the evaluation of history in general, Thucydides, on the other hand, was in Hellenistic times not as popular as his successors Xenophon and Theopompus of Chios (now mainly lost), or his predecessor Herodotus.²³ The Herodotean influence on such popular writers of the fourth century as Theopompus of Chios²⁴ and his contemporary Ephorus of Cyme (Asia Minor)²⁵ is evident and acknowledged.²⁶ Both Herodotus and Thucydides were regularly used by the Western Greek historians, especially for their treatment of Sicilian affairs. Certainly, the Herodotean heritage was handed down to third-century Sicilian historiography via those sources, but there is also evidence for a direct connection, as in the case of the fifth-century Sicilian Antiochus of Syracuse,²⁷ the earliest known Western Greek historian, who wrote local histories of Sicily and Magna Graecia, and may be one of Thucydides' sources.²⁸ Furthermore, one has to keep in mind that Herodotus spent the last years of his life in Thurii (Magna Graecia), therefore creating a lasting impression among the Western Greeks.²⁹ Thucydides' material found its way to the Western Greek historians as well, as Simon

¹⁹ Murray (1972), 202–3.

²⁰ Pöhlmann (2003), 2.

²¹ e.g. Marincola (2001), 58–60.

²² e.g. Murray (1972), 205; Hornblower (2006), 310.

²³ e.g. Hornblower (1995), 47, 63–5; Nicolai (2006), 718–19 ('the paradigmatic value of history as political science was discarded shortly afterward and fourth-century historians preferred to provide ethical paradigms than to focus exclusively on politics and war': 718).

²⁴ *FGrHist* 115.

²⁵ *FGrHist* 70.

²⁶ Murray (1972), 204–5; Riemann (1967), 29–33; Hornblower (2006), 310–12.

²⁷ *FGrHist* 555. Cf. Riemann (1967), 14; Pearson (1987), 11–18, 34: '... who perhaps aspired to be hailed as the Herodotus of the West'; Hornblower (2006), 309.

²⁸ Vattuone (2007), 191–3.

²⁹ e.g. Pearson (1987), 34, 111. Herodotus' interest in the history of Sicily and Magna Graecia resulted in the following passages: Hdt. 1.166–8, 5.43–9, 6.126–30, 7.153–68 and 170.

Hornblower has shown.³⁰ Apart from the tradition via Theopompus and Ephorus,³¹ it has been an established fact since antiquity that the fourth-century writer Philistus of Syracuse (c.400 BCE)³² was an admirer of the Thucydidean style.³³ Furthermore, Timaeus of Tauromenium occupied himself with the Thucydidean biography—his place of exile and death—and with topics concerning Sicily.³⁴

So far the survey has discussed the probability that the classical Greek historians were known in the early days of Roman historiography via the works of the Western Greek historians, and became sources for Fabius Pictor. We do know that Pictor himself achieved his goal of being read by the Western Greeks: At least one copy of his *Ῥωμαϊκά* was held in the library of second-century Tauromenium, as a dipinto confirmed which was discovered in modern Taormina in 1969.³⁵ Beside the common language, the lasting popularity of Fabius Pictor in the Greek communities may have been based on a deep-rooted feeling of familiarity concerning both topics and narrative design. The dipinto displays a short summary of the beginning of Pictor's history: as a preface to the narration of the Roman foundation by Romulus and Remus he placed a mythographical prehistory which began with the arrival of Hercules in Italy. This arrangement

³⁰ Hornblower (1995), 56–9.

³¹ Ibid., 56–7; Nicolai (2006), 706–7, 713–14.

³² *FGrHist* 556.

³³ e.g. Cic. *De Or.* 2.57. Cf. Pearson (1987), 19–30; Hornblower (1995), 56; Marincola (2001), 103–4; Nicolai (2006), 714.

³⁴ Timaeus 566 F 18, 101, 135–6 *FGrHist*. Cf. Pearson (1987), 37–51; Hornblower (1995), 58; Nicolai (2006), 714–15. The Sicilian historian Timaeus of Tauromenium, who died shortly after the outbreak of the First Punic War, is considered an important literary source for Pictor's *Ῥωμαϊκά*. Within the framework of his extensive work covering not only Sicilian history but the whole Mediterranean West including Carthage and central Italy, he summarized Roman history up to 264 BCE, thus being probably the first Greek author interested in Rome. Surveying the existing fragments one can see why Timaeus' (*Sicilian*) *History* was very attractive for subsequent Roman authors and even still read in the last century BCE. (He was praised by Cicero (*De Or.* 2.58), but much criticized by Polybius (12.25). Cf. Vattuone (2007), 196–9.) Using Sicily as his methodological point of reference he composed a universal history including mythographical, ethnological, and geographical details. Furthermore he compiled a (now lost) chronographical handbook which firmly established the counting of Olympiads as a tool for a synchronized timetable for later historians (Polyb. 12.11.1). Within the narration of the Roman foundation myths Fabius Pictor—and likewise his successor L. Cincius Alimentus (albeit the latter was the last one to do so: Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 7.74.1 = Cincius Alimentus F 1 *FGrHist*; cf. Frier (1979), 263)—relied heavily on counting Olympiads (Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 7.74.1 = Fabius Pictor F 3 *FGrHist*; cf. Feeney (2009), 143–4), thus demonstrating that the Western Greek historians were a major influence on early Roman historiography.

³⁵ SEG 26.1123. Cf. Frier (1979), 230–1; Beck and Walter (2001), 62–4.

accords with the Greek literary tradition, which combined myth and the establishment of a settlement into a *ktisis* that was viewed as a historical fact.³⁶

Imitations of particular stories from the Greek historians are also evident in this work: in his *ktisis* Fabius Pictor refers to the Herodotean narrative of the infant Cyrus. In Herodotus, Cyrus is saved by the shepherd Mitradates together with his wife Cyno (the name refers to the Greek word for 'bitch' and has a strong reminiscence of the Roman *lupa* 'she-wolf' who plays a prominent part in the foundation myth surrounding Romulus and Remus), who have lost their newborn child and raise Cyrus instead.³⁷ Although the tale of the abandoned gifted child who survives to fulfil his destiny is common,³⁸ and not found exclusively in Greek and Roman literature,³⁹ individual elements of Fabius Pictor's story, for instance, the fact that the shepherd's wife has recently lost her baby,⁴⁰ seem likely to be Herodotean in origin.⁴¹ It is the generally accepted view that Fabius Pictor found the narrative structure of this foundation story in the work of Diocles of Peparethus.⁴² Regarding the mythical founder Romulus, Diocles relied heavily on local Italic folk tales and the concept of an original single founder, a storyline habitual in the histories of the Western Greek writers of his time,⁴³ and combined these elements with the popular tale of the exposure and rescue of especially gifted children of noble origin.⁴⁴ It is assumed that his

³⁶ Cf. Hdt. 1.7; Polyb. 9.1.4. The narrative of Aeneas in Fabius Pictor contains an explanation of the founding of Alba Longa by a prophecy: a sow will show Aeneas the best place and should be sacrificed in the process of the foundation, Diod. 7.5.4–5 (= Fabius Pictor F 2 *FGrHist*). This is clearly reminiscent of older Greek foundation myths like the one of Cadmus, the mythical founder of Thebes, e.g. Beck and Walter (2001), 68. The transmitter seems to be Timaeus of Tauromenium (F 60–1 *FGrHist*), cf. Frier (1979), 262.

³⁷ Hdt. 1.112–13. Cf. Boedeker (2002), 110–11.

³⁸ Cf. Cornell (2001), 60–3.

³⁹ e.g. the exposure of the prophet Moses (Ex. 2:1–10). Cf. Binder (1964), 158–250.

⁴⁰ Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 1.79.10 (= Fabius Pictor F 4b *FGrHist*).

⁴¹ Cf. Frier (1979), 261; Beck and Walter (2001), 91.

⁴² Plut. *Rom.* 3–8 (= Diocles F 1 *FGrHist*; Fabius Pictor F 4a *FGrHist*). In the Graeco-Roman historiographical tradition the 3rd-cent. author Diocles of Peparethus was considered the first Greek writer (Plut. *Rom.* 8.9) to bring the Roman foundation myth into focus.

⁴³ e.g. Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 1.72.5 (= Callias of Syracuse F 5 *FGrHist* 564); Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 1.72.6 (= Dionysius of Chalcis F 10–11 *FGrHist* 840); Fest. 326L (= Alcimus of Sicily F 4 *FGrHist* 560).

⁴⁴ Cf. Binder (1964), 78–95, 153.

literary source was the lost drama *Tyro* by Sophocles.⁴⁵ Thus having created a powerful and exciting narrative, his version of the tale became the canonical storyline of all later Roman authors because of Fabius Pictor's adoption. When we analyse the appearance of the mixed Diocles/Pictor-storyline in later historians,⁴⁶ it seems probable that the aforementioned Herodotean narrative of the infant Cyrus' fate was inserted in the Dioclean narrative by Fabius Pictor himself.

The Roman writer seems to have taken an interest not only in Herodotus, but in Thucydides as well. In respect to the cost of constructing the temple consecrated to Juppiter Optimus Maximus, Fabius Pictor used the emblematic sum of 40 talents of war-booty⁴⁷ to link the urban development in Roman regal times to the Athenian building projects in classical times. By adapting the sum Thucydides provided concerning the amount of gold Phidias had used for embellishing the cult-statue of Athena inside the Parthenon,⁴⁸ he not only most favourably compared the religious core of Rome with the widely acclaimed cultural and religious nucleus of Athens, but he did so by annihilating the cultural difference between Rome and Greece on a temporal level: by referring to the Thucydidean image of Athens at the height of its power in the narrative context of the Roman regal period Fabius Pictor evokes (the factually anachronistic) image of a mighty pre-republican Rome,⁴⁹ providing an account that was later even surpassed by the fabulous exaggerations of his successors.⁵⁰ But there is another point to be made: we can assume that not only Fabius Pictor, but also his Western Greek and Roman audience knew Thucydides. Otherwise his subtle adaptation would have remained without effect.

Fabius Pictor and his readers thus seem to have been familiar with the stories and details included in Herodotus and Thucydides, and an influence on historiography at the structural level is also visible, since elements of Pictor's narrative preserved in the *Histories* of Polybius

⁴⁵ Arist. *Poet.* 1454b; cf. Frier (1979), 261.

⁴⁶ Plut. *Rom.* 3–8 (= Diocles F 1 *FGrHist*; Fabius Pictor F 4a *FGrHist*) vs. Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 1.79.4–83.3 (= Fabius Pictor F 4b *FGrHist*).

⁴⁷ Liv. 1.55.7–9 (= Fabius Pictor F 10 *FGrHist*).

⁴⁸ Thuc. 2.13.5.

⁴⁹ Frier (1979), 264: 'By ransacking the Greek classic historians, Pictor could find material for bolstering a version of Roman history not unworthy of Rome's place in the Mediterranean world.'

⁵⁰ Livy criticizes the elder annalist L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi who turned the 40 talents into the fantastic sum of 40,000 lb of silver, far too much even for Livy's taste (Liv. 1.55.9).

display a more basic Thucydidean adaptation.⁵¹ With regard to the outbreak of the Hannibalic War Fabius Pictor introduced two causes: the short-term cause, the conflict surrounding Saguntum, and the long-term cause, the covetousness and the domineering ambition of Hannibal's family. With this differentiation every reader in the Greek-speaking world must have been reminded of Thucydides and his concept of *aitiai* ('grievances') and *prophasis* ('truest cause') concerning the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War.⁵² Parallel to Thucydides' version of the Peloponnesian War, Fabius claims that the grievance concerning Saguntum was a regional conflict which could have been settled, but that the truest cause of war was the undisguised ambition of the Barcids, thus figuring the Romans in Thucydides' Sparta's role as the potential victims of a dominating aggressor who would not opt for coexistence. The underlying teaching—that Rome went to war because it was forced upon her—was certainly significant for the Greek reader, since there were Western Greek authors (such as Philinus of Acragas) who disseminated the opposing, pro-Carthaginian side of the story.⁵³ Seen in this context, even Fabius Pictor's adoption of Hercules as the forefather of the Italic peoples might have been a calculated move within a sort of diplomatic/propagandistic war of words, since once Hannibal had visited the shrine of Hercules in Gades (modern Cadiz) in 218 BCE prior to his march on Italy, the Barcid had firmly associated his favourite deity, Hercules-Melqart, with his own image as an invincible political and military leader.

With Fabius Pictor we have traced the influence of Herodotus and Thucydides back to the earliest Roman historiography. Although it is mostly lost, the *Ῥωμαϊκά* of Fabius Pictor showed not only isolated imitations of individual episodes of both classical writers, but also

⁵¹ Polyb. 3.8.1–8 (= Fabius Pictor F 21 *FGrHist*).

⁵² Thuc. 1.23.5–6. Cf. Hagmaier (2008), 1–8.

⁵³ Judging the contrasting presentations of the First Punic War by Fabius Pictor and his predecessor Philinus of Acragas, Polybius in his own historiographical work criticizes both authors' bias in respect to the different war-parties (Polyb. 1.14–15, cf. Marincola (1997), 114). As Philinus was still read in Polybian times and later, one can be sure that his presumably pro-Carthaginian account of the First Punic War (cf. the so-called Philinus Treaty, disputed in Polybius' *Histories* (Polyb. 3.26.3; cf. Liv. 9.43.26) was explosive reading material and a starting point for a pro-Roman evaluation of the causes and outcome of the First Punic War, particularly for a Roman writer like Fabius Pictor, who wrote in the context of the recent or still ongoing Hannibalic War.

an understanding of the structure, and the potential rhetorical uses of classical Greek historiography. In the Greek-influenced world of southern Italy and Sicily both Herodotus and Thucydides enjoyed wide popularity, so that their works were not only formative for Fabius' own historiography, but also helped him to get his message across to his Greek and Roman audiences. Why did Fabius Pictor take the trouble to establish Rome even from the beginnings as a mighty force to be reckoned with? Probably not out of a feeling of cultural inferiority concerning all things Greek; his motivations must have been rooted in the political necessity to form bonds with possible Greek allies and to present the Roman arguments concerning the Hannibalic war.

III. GREEK HISTORICAL WRITING IN ROME AFTER PYDNA

L. Cincius Alimentus,⁵⁴ another participant in the Hannibalic War,⁵⁵ also wrote in Greek, and followed Fabius Pictor in nearly every way.⁵⁶ As Bruce W. Frier⁵⁷ points out, there is a gap of around fifteen years between their praetorships, which leads to the conclusion that Cincius Alimentus wrote his *Annales* shortly after 201 BCE, the end of the Hannibalic War. After that we hear nothing of Roman prose historiography for nearly thirty years⁵⁸ until one of the leading men of the Roman senate, M. Porcius Cato Censorius (*Cato Maior*)⁵⁹ wrote his *Origines*: the first historiographical prose written in Latin.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ *FGrHist* 810. Cf. Beck and Walter (2001), 137–47; Walter (2004), 255–8.

⁵⁵ He claimed to have talked to Hannibal in person while a Carthaginian prisoner (Liv. 21.38.2–5 = Cincius Alimentus F 5 *FGrHist*).

⁵⁶ Frier (1979), 238–9 N. 31 for the deviations.

⁵⁷ Frier (1979), 239.

⁵⁸ Only the aforementioned Ennian epic of c.180 BCE disrupts the silence.

⁵⁹ Although a *homo novus* ('new man'), Cato Censorius (234–149 BCE) achieved the highest public offices in Rome, the consulate in 195 (triumph in 194) and the censorship in 184; cf. Astin (1978), 1–103, 211–39; Albrecht (1994), 314–17; Beck and Walter (2001), 148–224; Gotter (2003); Beck (2007).

⁶⁰ e.g. Beck (2007), 260: 'It was a signal that the Romans possessed both a language and a set of intellectual abilities which were competitive with the *lingua academica* of the Greeks as well as their cultural achievements.'

The *Origines*,⁶¹ named after one of the main topics of his work, the *ktiseis* or foundation stories of Rome and other Italic communities (books 1–3),⁶² were different from the historiographical works of his predecessors: Cato constructed a chronologically structured tripartite history (*ktisis*/regal period/early republican times up to 450 BCE—a summarized account of events from 450 BCE to 168 BCE—followed by a far more detailed account of recent events from 168 up to Cato's death in 149 BCE), but differed inasmuch as he put the focus not entirely on Roman development, but on the Italic peoples in general (two of the seven books). He also avoided naming prominent Roman politicians and generals wherever possible, giving the Roman *populus* as a whole precedence over its leaders; finally, he arranged his account *capitulatim*⁶³ ('by heads')—that is, inside of each section of his narrative he organized his material by topics, rather than according to a predisposed chronological order.⁶⁴

Due to his successful political career and the abundance of preserved self-testimonials, which included speeches, technical literature, and his *Origines*, and showed Cato as a 'new man' who climbed the political and social ladder despite his humble origins, Cato Censorius became *the* role model for aspiring politicians in later times. To the last generation of the Roman Republic Cato's persona as the true, hard-working, and modest man who represented vital Roman virtues such as piety, frugality, personal integrity, and patriotism seemed inseparable from the 'lost paradise' of the Middle Republic.⁶⁵

Cato's alleged defiance of all things Greek harmonizes with this iconic representation: the presumed antihellenic arc in Cato's thought spans from his Latin *Origines*, to his preference for an agrarian 'Roman' lifestyle without any 'Eastern' luxuries (such as multi-coloured clothing for women), and his well-documented resistance to the Athenian embassy led by the philosophers Carneades, Diogenes, and Critolaus in 155 BCE.⁶⁶ Modern scholarship has

⁶¹ *HRR* (= Peter (1967 [1914]) I, 55–97; Albrecht (1994), 317–26; Beck and Walter (2001), 148–224.

⁶² *Nep. Cato* 3.3–4.

⁶³ *Ibid.* 3.4.

⁶⁴ e.g. Albrecht (1994), 319; Beck and Walter (2001), 151; Gotter (2003), 115–16. *Pace Astin* (1978), 215, 218; Dillery (2009), 92.

⁶⁵ e.g. Cicero: *Cato Maior de Senecute*; Cic. *De Or.* 1.1; *Rep.* 2.1–3; *Cato* 37, 60. Cf. Astin (1978), 130–56, 289–94.

⁶⁶ e.g. Cic. *Rep.* 3.9 (= Lactant. *Inst.* 5.14.3–5); Plut. *Cato Mai.* 22.1–23.3. Cf. Astin (1978), 174–9; Jehne (1999), 119–26.

demythologized the persona of Cato Censorius: in our view his opposition to the philosophers' embassy sprang from political calculation instead of cultural antipathy, and we know that he was well acquainted with Greek historical and philosophical writings.⁶⁷ Similar to later authors, such as Cicero, Cato was respectful towards the Greek classical cultural heritage, but showed a certain snobbish attitude towards the contemporary Greeks who—in the eyes of the Roman victors—had proved themselves unworthy of exercising power.⁶⁸

Cato was therefore not ignorant of Greek antecedents, but like most educated members of the Roman nobility at that time, was probably familiar with the Greek language and to some extent with Greek literature;⁶⁹ moreover he is said to have taken a special interest in the Greek authors later in his life, when he was in the process of writing his *Origines* between 170 and 149 BCE.⁷⁰ The victory over Perseus at Pydna in 168 BCE left not only a political and military legacy, but also a cultural one: the war-booty of the victorious L. Aemilius Paullus included the library of the defeated king and certainly literary material from the estates of other Macedonian nobles as well.⁷¹ According to Plutarch,⁷² at this time Cato developed a preference for the fourth-century Athenian orator and statesman Demosthenes, and also for Thucydides. In both cases he used the works as rhetorical models: in Thucydides' case, Cato mined the fictional speeches of his account of the Peloponnesian War; in Demosthenes' case, the speeches actually given by or attributed to the orator.⁷³ From reading Plutarch one gets the impression that Cato's taste for Greek literature was a matter of rhetorical style, adornment, or simply conventional technique in the composition of historiography, since for substance he could fall back upon his Italic

⁶⁷ As Astin (1978), 172 puts it: 'In general, though Cato could appreciate Greek writings, he did not like Greeks as people.' Cf. Jehne (1999), 118–19.

⁶⁸ e.g. Cic. *De Or.* 2.265; Cf. Astin (1978), 168–81; Gruen (1984), 260–6.

⁶⁹ e.g. Astin (1978), 159–61.

⁷⁰ Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 2.4. Cf. Astin (1978), 161–8.

⁷¹ Plut. *Aem.* 28.6. Cf. Pöhlmann (2008), 50; Astin (1978), 167; Canfora (2006), 721–3, 'It was the first time that such a large quantity of books had been brought to Rome' (723).

⁷² Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 2.4: '... he profited in the rhetorical field a little by Thucydides, but more by Demosthenes. His literary works, however, are distinctly embellished with Greek thoughts and stories, and many literal translations were placed among his own sayings and proverbs.'

⁷³ Canfora (2006), 721–2.

sources, such as Fabius Pictor, Ennius, Timaeus of Tauromenium, or the third-century chronographer Eratosthenes of Cyrene.⁷⁴

A closer look at Cato's *Origines* will help to show whether Cato's use of his Greek sources was just a matter of rhetorical embellishment, or on the contrary revealed a genuine engagement with Herodotus and Thucydides. Like Q. Fabius Pictor before him, Cato followed the Greek literary tradition with his Italic *origines* or *ktiseis*. On the one hand, he used the narrative structures of such *ktiseis* established by Greek historiography since the writings of Herodotus:⁷⁵ Cato's foundation stories included topographical and etymological references to the origins of the settlements, as well as tales of wonder and miracles.⁷⁶ The evidence Cato provides hints at the underlying reason (*aition*) for the foundings, and also displays the research for data the ancient authors called 'inquiry' or *historie/historia*.⁷⁷ On the other hand, as regards contents, Cato bestowed upon the Italic settlements a Greek descent, thus demonstrating the Romans and Italics to be the true heirs of former (archaic and classical) Greek greatness.⁷⁸

It is not far-fetched to presume that Cato's Roman (Latin with regard to the language) self-confidence was the cultural manifestation of the changed political climate in the third century BCE.

⁷⁴ Cf. Albrecht (1994), 319; Beck and Walter (2001), 167; Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 1.74.2 (= Cato Maior F 17 Peter).

⁷⁵ Dillery (2009), 95 calls it 'a re-deployment of Greek historiographical forms in a new setting'.

⁷⁶ e.g. Schol. Veron. ad Verg. *Aen.* 7.681 (= Cato Maior F 59 Peter): foundation of Praeneste; Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 2.49.2–3 (= Cato Maior F 50 Peter) and Serv. *Auct. ad Verg. Aen.* 8.638 (= Cato Maior F 51 Peter): Sabine origin; Paradoxographus Palatinus 21 Giannini (not featured in *HRR*): gigantic mice; Varr. *Rust.* 2.4.11 (= Cato Maior F 39 Peter): enormous pigs; Varr. *Rust.* 2.3.3 (= Cato Maior F 52 Peter): athletic goats. Cf. Saïd (2007), 82–4 for Herodotean examples.

⁷⁷ e.g. Prob. *Praef. in Verg. Buc.* p. 326 H (= Cato Maior F 71 Peter): Cato linked the settlement of Taurianum to the myth of Orestes in order to establish a development from Greek (mythical) times to Italian (historical) times, thus creating a *lieu de mémoire*, cf. Beck and Walter (2001), 194–5; Schepens (2007), 42–54; Bakker (2002), 7: 'Herodotus' project is the *historie* of an *aitie*, whatever sense we will attribute to these terms in the final analysis.' Cf. Hdt. 1.1: 'What Herodotus the Halicarnassian has inquired, he has put down [in writing], so that neither men's deeds were erased by time, nor the great and wondrous deeds of the Greeks and barbarians alike should remain without praise, especially the deeper reason why they clashed.'

⁷⁸ e.g. Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 1.11.1 (= Cato Maior F 6 Peter): The *aborigines*, the first settlers who came to Italy long before the Trojan War and subsequently the advent of Aeneas, were Achaeans (= Greeks) of unknown origin. Cf. Gotter (2003), 128–31; (2009), 112–15.

Where Fabius Pictor's troubled context had influenced his aim to confirm a Roman–Greek cultural alliance against Hannibal, in Cato's lifetime Rome had proved itself to be the centre of the Hellenic *oikoumene*.⁷⁹ Thus, Cato was able to integrate his *Origines* into the heritage of the classical Greek historiographical works in a new, more confident, way: in his proem Cato referred to the benefit of historiography.⁸⁰ In this small reference we can trace back an imitation of Thucydides' method-chapter, which had become a model for his successors.⁸¹ As John Marincola puts it, 'all ancient historians seek authority in tradition'.⁸² This is especially relevant in the case of Cato Censorius, who obviously endeavoured to assimilate Rome into the Greek tradition in order to underline a historical necessity for the Roman people, namely, to fulfil their destiny to dominate a world shaped by Greek culture.

Cato unabashedly aimed to surpass classical authority. For instance, without naming the protagonists (consul and military tribune) he created an intriguing narrative of a daring and death-defying Roman officer and his men in the midst of a hopeless situation during the First Punic War.⁸³ The officer offered to sacrifice himself and his 400 men in order to save the bulk of the consular army, which had marched into a trap and was utterly outnumbered by the Punic enemy. His plan was to draw the main attack onto himself and his men, and to hold his position, so that the other soldiers could escape. Up to this point the story draws upon the famous example of Leonidas and his 300 men at the battle of Thermopylae in 480 BCE, as it is told by Herodotus.⁸⁴ Later authors were quite aware of this narrative imitation, even to the point of

⁷⁹ e.g. Dillery (2009), 94: 'Latin was the new "international language" as Greek had been before.'

⁸⁰ Excerpt. rhetor. Paris. p. 588 H (= Cato Maior F 3 Peter): ... *historiae bonum generaliter commendamus, ut Cato, ...* (... 'we advise in general the usefulness of history, as Cato did, ...'). In this small excerpt, Cato (*de historia*) is compared to Sallust who pointed out his reason for writing history (*de persona*), and to Livy who emphasized his subject (*de materia*).

⁸¹ Thuc. 1.22.4. Cf. Rood (2006), 234–8; Kallet (2006), 335–40.

⁸² Marincola (1997), 266.

⁸³ Gell. 3.7.1–19 (= Cato Maior F 83 Peter). The story of the tribune on a suicide mission (in modern military jargon) as an *exemplum virtutis* ('example of bravery') seemed to be common knowledge in later Roman historiography, as Gellius put forward the name of the tribune, Q. Caedicius, which Cato Censorius had deliberately omitted. Cf. Beck and Walter (2001), 200–3; Dillery (2009), 95–100; Gotter (2009), 111–12.

⁸⁴ Hdt. 7.201–39.

‘correcting’ Cato’s (historically truthful) information of 400 Roman soldiers to 300, hence compelling the Roman and Greek narratives to match each other.⁸⁵ Furthermore, in his explanation of the episode Cato used the Ionic Greek form of *Leonides*, thus confirming his direct knowledge of the Herodotean story.⁸⁶

However, the end of the narrative differs immensely from the Herodotean account: as iconic ‘true Romans’, all 400 soldiers die while doing their duty, but the tribune survives half dead, since the gods reward his bravery and self-sacrifice for his country, and is therefore enabled to do further good deeds for the Roman community.⁸⁷

Here Cato creates opposing examples of the fame that followed bravery. By contrasting the Greek and Roman results of the *similar* heroic action undertaken by the unnamed Roman tribune vs. King Leonidas of Sparta—showing on the one hand the immortalization of Leonidas in public memory by monuments,⁸⁸ on the other hand *parva laus* (‘small praise’) for the tribune by his countrymen—Cato passed judgement on Rome’s alleged cultural predecessors. In his presentation, the Romans surpassed the Greeks not only in the action itself, but also in the reception of such deeds. The tribune is a paradigm for the Romans in general: ‘true Romans’ would not claim rewards for giving everything for their fellows, nor were the recipients of such deeds expected to reward these heroes more than others.

In Cato’s interpretation, the tribune and his men behaved as every Roman would have done in a similar situation. In exceeding even a Spartan king when it comes to bravery and willingness to self-sacrifice, Cato created the Roman people as *über*-Spartans. The confirmation of the truth of Cato’s account is the gods’ reward: the tribune gets a new lease of life so that he can be a living, constant *exemplum virtutis* instead of being (only) immortalized in human

⁸⁵ Cf. Flor. 2.2.13–14.

⁸⁶ Cato Censorius’ mention of the Spartan king is the first reference to Leonidas in Latin historiography known to us, cf. Beck and Walter (2001), 202–3.

⁸⁷ Cf. Hdt 2.229 on the Herodotean Aristodamus, who survives Thermopylae (cf. Lateiner (2002), 365 on his choice between ‘fight or flight’) to fight the battle of Plataea. His obedience to Leonidas’ orders (to stay behind because of an eye infection which would render him useless in the battle against the Persians) earned him communal dishonour to the point that some Spartans even questioned his *aristeia* in the subsequent battle of Plataea after his ‘kamikazi death’ (Lateiner 2002, 367).

⁸⁸ Dillery (2009), 97 points out that Cato could have had the Herodotean text as a monument of memory in mind.

historical memory for one good deed. Cato's occupation with the Herodotean heritage is even more significant when one keeps in mind that he himself had fought a battle at Thermopylae. In 191 BCE he took part in the consular campaign of Manlius Acilius Glabrio against Antiochus III. Due to his knowledge of the geographical setting of Thermopylae—whether through local informants or by visualization of the Herodotean description—Cato successfully managed a surprise attack on the Aetolian allies of Antiochus III.⁸⁹ In sum, Cato's Thermopylean adaptation is a fine example of up-to-date Latin historiography: using the authority of the obviously well-known Herodotean story, Cato evokes the image of a collective Roman strength which multiplies the Greek ideal of *aristeia* and shows the Romans' down-to-earth approach with regard to the employment of manpower:⁹⁰ as an author he opts for neither of the two opposing fates (highest single praise for the dead Leonidas vs. ultimate penalty for the surviving Aristodamus) but shows that true civic greatness lies in the constant effort of all members of the community. By presenting 'the Roman way' as a third solution he clearly challenges Herodotus as a narrator and as a representative of the Greeks' former literary greatness. In the end Cato not only considered himself a superior author, but also used the Herodotean story for self-promotion, since he was able to pass judgement on the moral value of the Thermopylean paradigm through his text and also in terms of actual military achievement as the creator of a new *lieu de mémoire* by his defeat of the Aetolians in 191 BCE.

We have knowledge of ten Roman historians who worked between 150 and 120 BCE—two of them, A. Postumius Albinus and C. Acilius, using the Greek language again—who did not follow the Catonian textual structure by topics (*capitulatim*), but rather wrote in an annalistic format, according to a predisposed chronological order.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 13.1–14.4. Cf. Dillery (2009), 97: 'In this case he played the Persians' guide, Ephialtes the Malian, not the heroic Spartans.' Later Cato used the victory for self-promotion in Rome (Liv. 36.21.4; Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 14.2–4). Cf. Dillery (2009), 98: 'Cato had a view of events he wanted to popularize in which Thermopylae (not Magnesia) was the key defeat of Antiochus, a battle moreover whose outcome he claimed to have decisively shaped, not his commanding officer, Glabrio.'

⁹⁰ The life of the surviving Roman commander C. Terentius Varro (cos. 216 BCE) after the disastrous battle of Cannae showed further employment and a fair treatment by his peers, cf. Liv. 22.61.14–15.

⁹¹ Cf. for further details Frier (1979), 207–13; Walter (2004), 296–319, 329–34; Beck (2007).

Generally speaking, all of them followed—with deviations, of course—the historiographical tradition formed by Fabius Pictor and his Western Greek predecessors.⁹² Moreover, in around 120–110 BCE a new development began in Roman historiography: perhaps out of a desire for originality in format, even when the content was canonically predetermined, L. Coelius Antipater wrote the first Latin historiographical monograph.⁹³ He rejected the usual idea of constructing a *historia tripartita* (mythographical *ktisis*—summary of the events in between—contemporary history) and wrote about the Hannibalic War—his work was later known as the *Bellum Punicum*.⁹⁴ Like his Greek predecessor Thucydides, he formed his monograph around a central theme in order to display the political dimensions of an epoch which in Mediterranean eyes changed the world.⁹⁵ No doubt he had also read the *Histories* of the Greek politician and writer Polybius of Megalopolis⁹⁶ who—writing prior to him—centred his work on the task of explaining to a Greek audience Rome's achievement of dominion over the Mediterranean world in the fifty-three years between 220 BCE and 167 BCE.⁹⁷

The Hannibalic War as a starting point of Roman Mediterranean dominance must have been an attractive subject to Coelius Antipater, since he wrote in times that were characterized by open internal unrest and therefore far from the already idealized Middle Republic. Similar to Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*, he dealt with different theatres of war on multiple layers of time frame.⁹⁸ Moreover, he presented ethnographical and myth-historical background information,⁹⁹ and included imaginary speeches, letters, and visions in

⁹² e.g. Strab. 5.3.3 (= C. Acilius F 1 *FGrHist* 813) and Varr. *Rust.* 2.1.9 (= L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi F 1 Peter) referring to the myth of Hercules.

⁹³ Cf. Frier (1979), 214; Beck and Walter (2001), 36; Beck (2007), 264.

⁹⁴ Cic. *Orat.* 230 (= Coelius Antipater F 1 Peter); originally it was simply called *historiae*, cf. Beck and Walter (2004), 37.

⁹⁵ Canfora (2006), 727–8.

⁹⁶ Cf. Beck and Walter (2004), 36; Canfora (2006), 727.

⁹⁷ Polyb. 1.1.5: from the antecedents of the Hannibalic War up to the victory over Perseus (Third Macedonian War). Cf. Pelling (2007), 244–50.

⁹⁸ e.g. Liv. 26.11.8–11 (= Coelius Antipater F 28 Peter); Non. p. 98 L (= Coelius Antipater F 30 Peter); Liv. 29.25.1–4 (= Coelius Antipater F 39 Peter); Serv. *Auct. ad Verg. Aen.* 4.206 (= Coelius Antipater F 55 Peter).

⁹⁹ e.g. Plin. *HN* 3.132 (= Coelius Antipater F 13 Peter); Liv. 21.38.5–6 (= Coelius Antipater F 14 Peter); Serv. *Auct. ad Verg. Aen.* 1.77 (= Coelius Antipater F 31 Peter); Schol. Leid. *ad Verg. Georg.* 2.197 (= Coelius Antipater F 35 Peter); Plin. *HN* 31.21 (= Coelius Antipater F 51 Peter); Serv. *Auct. ad Verg. Aen.* 10.145 (= Coelius Antipater F 52 Peter).

dreams for both war-parties.¹⁰⁰ Thus he could claim to report the events truthfully, and in accordance with historiographical methods developed by both Herodotus and Thucydides.¹⁰¹ Moreover, his handling of evidence shows a distinctly Herodotean style. Perhaps due to the fact that he was not able to refer to personal military and political expertise,¹⁰² he seems to have tended to provide evidence in several different versions, including not only Roman, but also pro-Carthaginian sources.¹⁰³ For instance, in describing the death of M. Claudius Marcellus (208 BCE),¹⁰⁴ he worked with three different types of proof: oral tradition (*unam traditam fama*, 'one story which was handed down [orally]'), written evidence in form of an epitaph by Marcellus' son, who was declared an eyewitness (*alteram scriptam in laudatione filii, qui rei gestae interfuerit*, 'the second by the written *laudatio* of his son who was present at the event'), and the weight of his own research (*tertiam quam ipse pro inquisita ac sibi comperta affert*, 'the third as being the result of his [Coelius'] research'). As Cato Censorius had done before him, Coelius Antipater stressed his authority as a researcher of data which he processed in front of his readers. This claim of truthfulness, which is supported by calling the reader's attention to the selection of evidence from diverse sources, and the reinforced importance of the narrator inside and outside the text, should be seen not only as a legacy of the classical writers but also as an adaptation followed by later historians.¹⁰⁵

In order to establish our view of Coelius Antipater's relationship to Herodotus and Thucydides on a firmer footing we must briefly turn our attention to a figure already mentioned, namely Polybius, since it is generally acknowledged that the *Histories* of Polybius of

¹⁰⁰ Cic. *Div.* 1.49 (= Coelius Antipater F 11 Peter); Cic. *Div.* 1.77–80 (= Coelius Antipater F 20 Peter); Cic. *Div.* 1.48 (= Coelius Antipater F 34 Peter); Gell. 10.24.6 (= Coelius Antipater F 25 Peter); Prisc. Gramm. 6 p. 198 H (= Coelius Antipater F 26 Peter).

¹⁰¹ Prisc. Gramm. 8 p. 383 H (= Coelius Antipater F 2 Peter). Cf. Thuc. 1.22.

¹⁰² Cf. Albrecht (1994), 307–8; Beck and Walter (2004), 35; Beck (2007), 264: 'embodiment of this new professionalization.'

¹⁰³ His main literary sources were Fabius Pictor and Cato Censorius, but he was also aware of the work of the Sicilian historian Silenus of Caleacte (175 *FGrHist*) who belonged to Hannibal's retinue, e. g. Cic. *Div.* 1.49 (= Coelius Antipater F 11 Peter). For Herodotus' method of collecting information, cf. Hornblower (2002).

¹⁰⁴ Liv. 27.27.11–14 (= Coelius Antipater F 29 Peter). Cf. Beck and Walter (2004), 64–6.

¹⁰⁵ The most important is of course Sallust, see below section IV.

Megalopolis (c.200–120 BCE), which covered the epoch between 220 and 144 BCE, were of great influence on the Roman historiographical tradition. Polybius was considered a writer between Greece and Rome.¹⁰⁶ Deported to Italy as a hostage after the Third Macedonian War in 167 BCE, he soon befriended influential Romans and was subsequently viewed as their ‘guest’, not as their detainee,¹⁰⁷ earning this preferential treatment because of his comparable social and cultural background, his political and military accomplishments prior to the catastrophe at Pydna, and his military knowledge. Two-thirds of his forty books are lost to the modern reader, but the remainder draw a fairly accurate picture of his self-imposed arrangement of topics in the form of *pragmatike historia* (‘pragmatic [i.e. action-filled] historiography’). Polybius concentrated on political history, abstaining from the dramatic disposition of historiographical narrative favoured in Hellenistic times (cf. rhetorical and tragic historiography), combining a diachronic narrative with topically arranged digressions.¹⁰⁸ In terms of his main claims on pragmatic historiography (truthfulness and credibility, study of causation, intention of historiography), Polybius followed Thucydides rather than the mainstream of the fourth- and third-century Hellenistic historiography.¹⁰⁹ In his criticism of Theopompus of Chios he mentioned Thucydides as a paradigm for ‘real’ (= political) historiography,¹¹⁰ and in his criticism of Timaeus of Tauromenium he compared Timaeus’ insertion of speeches into rhetorical historiography unfavourably to Thucydides’ treatment of speeches.¹¹¹ Polybius’ statements about methodology were closely connected to Thucydides’ famous method-chapter, even to the point of imitation.¹¹² With regard to the causation of events which lead

¹⁰⁶ Cf. the fine portrait by Davidson (2009), 123: ‘the methodological heir of Thucydides, a continuator of the great third-century Sicilian historian Timaeus’.

¹⁰⁷ Cic. *Rep.* 4.3 *noster hospes* (‘our guest’). Cf. Davidson (2009), 123: ‘He was also a paradigmatic captive Greek who captivated his Roman conquerors.’

¹⁰⁸ e.g. Polyb. 3.57–9. Cf. Marincola (1997), 24–6, 144–51; Rood (2004), 147–64; Pelling (2007), 245–50; Canfora (2006), 724–7; Gowing (2010), 389–91.

¹⁰⁹ Both authors had similar backgrounds including a political and military career, and therefore claimed to be interested in a small but more profound and erudite audience; cf. Polyb. 1.3.9–10, 9.2.6; Thuc. 1.22.4. Cf. Rood (2004), 164: ‘the controlling voice of the narrator blends easily with the voice of social control’.

¹¹⁰ Polyb. 8.13.

¹¹¹ Polyb. 12.25a. Thuc. 1.22.1. Cf. Canfora (2006), 724–5.

¹¹² Polyb. 9.1–2; Thuc. 1.22.

to political and military conflicts, Polybius tried to hone the Thucydidean difference between *aitiai* ('grievances' = short-term cause), *prophasis* ('truest cause' = long-term cause), and *arche tou polemou* ('beginning/outbreak of the war').¹¹³

Polybius did not mention Herodotus among the predecessors he critiqued in book 12, although he stated that he frequently passed over the older authors.¹¹⁴ It is generally assumed that some ethnographical topics in his *Histories* are based on the Herodotean writings, a supposition that finds confirmation in the historiographical fragments of his successor Posidonius of Apameia.¹¹⁵ Other passages clearly display a Herodotean origin: for example, the narrative arrangement of the ambivalent characterization of the third-century politician Aratus of Sicyon is strongly reminiscent of the opposing characters of the autocrats featured in the famous 'Constitutional Debate'.¹¹⁶ In sum, Polybius was indebted to both classical historians, in particular as his chosen topic justified the troublesome undertaking of writing history: all three authors were occupied with a conflict between contradictory political systems whose outcome would inevitably change the balance of power in the Mediterranean world.

IV. ATTICISM IN THE LAST GENERATION OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

The last century BCE was a period of violent political and social transformation in Italy. It was also a time of major literary production, especially in the field of historiography. The annalistic scheme, a year-by-year account *ab urbe condita* ('from the founding of the city onwards'), prevailed¹¹⁷ just as a new interest in the presentation of autopsy and recent events arose. Such accounts were aptly called

¹¹³ Thuc. 1.23.5–6; 1.118.1–2; Polyb. 22.18.6. Cf. Canfora (2006), 725.

¹¹⁴ Polyb. 34.5.1.

¹¹⁵ *FGrHist* 87. Cf. Hornblower (2006), 314–15; Gowing (2010), 386; Lateiner (1989), 145–62; Malitz (1983), 67, 76, 83, 98–9, 193, 203.

¹¹⁶ Polyb. 4.8; Hdt. 3.80–83. Cf. Lateiner (1989), 163–86.

¹¹⁷ e.g. the so-called 'Later Annalists' (writing in the times after Sulla) Q. Claudius Quadrigarius, Valerius Antias, and C. Licinius Macer; cf. Beck and Walter (2004), 109–240, 314–45; Walter (2003).

historiae after the Herodotean principle of recording the result of one's own inquiries.¹¹⁸

In the first half of this century Greek manuscripts found their way to Italy once again because of Roman military interventions in central Greece and Asia Minor. During the Mithridatic Wars L. Cornelius Sulla besieged and sacked pro-Pontic Athens in the spring of 86 BCE,¹¹⁹ thereby transferring a huge amount of literary material to Rome; these spoils certainly exceeded the Macedonian war-booty of 168 BCE. Later, after the conquest of the Pontic capital Sinope by L. Licinius Lucullus in the summer of 70 BCE and the expulsion of Mithridates VI Eupator by Cn. Pompeius in 66 BCE, the Pontic royal libraries, among other valuable things, were sent to Rome.¹²⁰ Now Roman historians could fall back upon two different manuscript traditions: on the one hand, they had long possessed the Hellenistic arrangement of the classical material by the Alexandrian editor-critics, which on the other hand was now supplemented by the older, 'untainted' Athenian copies. In the case of Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*, the aforementioned L. Coelius Antipater—still relying on the Alexandrian arrangement available prior to the arrival of Sullan war-booty—subdivided his monographical treatment of the *Bellum Punicum* into segments each of which spanned over two or three years of war. From 86 BCE onwards, authors were aware of the year-by-year account of the older Athenian arrangement of the Thucydidean books.¹²¹

The influx of the Athenian scrolls inspired the burgeoning popularity of Attic literary production of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE at Rome. As we saw above, a Roman senator such as Cato Censorius had long since displayed a knack for imitating Demosthenic oratory and inserting passages modelled on Thucydides into his political speeches and historiographical works, thus setting himself apart from the Hellenistic mainstream of rhetorical and tragic historiography, and evoking a pre-Hellenistic cultural and political heritage for Roman *Machtspolitik*. From the second half of the first century BCE onwards, however, the rhetorical imitation of the classical Greek orators/writers became an increasingly fashionable literary trend:

¹¹⁸ e.g. L. Cornelius Sisenna; cf. Beck and Walter (2004), 241–313.

¹¹⁹ App. *Mithr.* 116–55; Plut. *Sulla* 12–14.

¹²⁰ Cf. Pöhlmann (2008), 50–2; Canfora (2006), 729.

¹²¹ Canfora (2006), 727–35.

Atticism¹²² caused Roman authors to focus much more keenly on the Thucydidean approach to historiography.

An increased esteem for Thucydides had been sporadically visible in the years before this time: for instance, in order to convince his readers of the consuls' honesty Q. Claudius Quadrigarius inserted into his *Annales*¹²³ a letter allegedly written by the consuls of 278 BCE, C. Fabricius Luscinus and Q. Aemilius Papus, to the Epirote king Pyrrhus.¹²⁴ This letter is the oldest preserved evidence in Roman historiography of the adaptation of this literary technique, which was introduced by Thucydides and his successors.¹²⁵ Claudius Quadrigarius' contemporary, L. Cornelius Sisenna most likely subdivided the narrative of his *historiae*¹²⁶ by incorporating digressions in a manner introduced into historiography by Herodotus and Thucydides: three fragments refer to the story of Aeneas in such detail that we can assume either a digression with regards to Roman myth-historical times or an unknown minor work by Sisenna.¹²⁷ Finally, Q. Aelius Tubero¹²⁸ was a renowned follower of the Thucydidean style:¹²⁹ beside rhetorical imitation he seemed to have been especially keen on careful and thorough groundwork regarding his narrative,¹³⁰ furthermore, he was determined to demythologize legendary events, e.g. the tale of the Trojan Horse.¹³¹ Nevertheless, he

¹²² Cf. Cicero's criticism: Cic. *Orat.* 76–91. *Brut.* 67–70; Atticism as a rhetorical concept was mentioned first in a letter to Atticus in 54 BCE (Cic. *Att.* 4.19.1: *ille Latinus ἀττικισμός*), cf. Cuypers (2010), 328.

¹²³ The 23 books, written c.70/50 BCE, covered the times from the Gallic Wars (c.400–360 BCE) up to the 70s BCE, cf. Beck and Walter (2004), 110.

¹²⁴ Gell. 3.8.6–8 (= Claudius Quadrigarius F 41 Peter).

¹²⁵ Cf. Beck and Walter (2004), 136.

¹²⁶ The *historiae*, written c.78–67 BCE, covered the times from the beginnings of the Social War (91 BCE) up to the end of the Sullan regime (c.79/78 BCE). 78 BCE marked the starting point for Sallust's *historiae*; Sallust gave his predecessor Cornelius Sisenna credit for being meticulous on the Sullan topic (Sall. *Iug.* 95.2), cf. Beck and Walter (2004), 242.

¹²⁷ Serv. *ad Verg. Aen.* 1.242 (Cornelius Sisenna F 1 Peter); Serv. *ad Verg. Aen.* 11.316 (Cornelius Sisenna F 2 Peter); Non. p. 185 L (Cornelius Sisenna F 3 Peter); cf. Beck and Walter (2004), 244–8.

¹²⁸ Aelius Tubero, author of at least fourteen books of *historiae*, presumably written in the 30s BCE, is usually identified as Quintus, not as his father Lucius, cf. Beck and Walter (2004), 346–8, *pace* Albrecht (1994), 312–13.

¹²⁹ His contemporary Dionysius of Halicarnassus dedicated his work on Thucydides to him, cf. Dion. Hal. *Thuc.* 25.

¹³⁰ Non. p. 600 L (= Aelius Tubero F 1 Peter); cf. Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 1.80.1 (= Aelius Tubero F 3 Peter).

¹³¹ Serv. *Auct. ad Verg. Aen.* 2.15 (= Aelius Tubero F 2 Peter).

could not totally free himself from the Herodotean tradition within Hellenistic rhetorical and tragic historiography when he wrote about incidents which were in content and style firmly implanted in Roman public memory throughout the whole republican period, for instance, the deeds of M. Atilius Regulus in the First Punic War: at one point Aelius Tubero referred to the alleged fight of Regulus' whole army with a gigantic snake (120 feet long) whose putative skin was later exhibited in Rome in order to prove the myth-historical tale.¹³² Another deeply dramatic display of Regulus' heroic qualities is embedded into the tale of his death: bound by an oath Regulus returned voluntarily into Carthaginian captivity and was subsequently killed under ghastly torture, e.g. burning out his eyes.¹³³

In 55 BCE Cicero occupied himself with the theoretical framework of an up-to-date historiography with which he was immensely pleased:¹³⁴ in his view Roman historiography still waited for its master—Cicero himself—since all of his Roman predecessors lacked the rhetorical style which should be typical for the genre, but had yet to be blended with an account of events in order to create educative and impressive historical writing.¹³⁵ For Cicero, who thought that the criteria of style and rhetoric should be the same for both historiography and oratory, historiography was an *opus oratorium maxime* ('highly literary performance').¹³⁶

Surveying Cicero's *œuvre* one can conclude that he failed to prove his talent as a historian. He never wrote the announced *historia*¹³⁷ because of the political turmoil in the last period of his life,¹³⁸ but one can assume that he would have preferred to follow the more overtly rhetorical approach typical of Hellenistic historiography (as some remains of his lost autobiographical epics and his correspondence with future biographers show).¹³⁹

¹³² Gell. 7.3 (= Aelius Tubero F 8 Peter).

¹³³ Gell. 7.4.2–3 (= Aelius Tubero F 9 Peter).

¹³⁴ Cic. *De Or.* 2.36.

¹³⁵ Cic. *De Or.* 2.51–72; *Leg.* 1.5–13. Cf. Beck and Walter (2001), 19–21.

¹³⁶ Cic. *Leg.* 1.5. Cf. Samotta (2009), 395–6.

¹³⁷ Cic. *Leg.* 1.9.

¹³⁸ Cf. Samotta (2009), 47–58.

¹³⁹ e.g. *Cedant arma togae concedat laurea laudi* ('Arms should give way to the toga, [military] laurel to [civilian] praise'), Cic. *Off.* 1.77. He composed two historiographical epics dealing with the times beginning from his consulate in 63 BCE to his return from exile in 57 BCE, cf. Cic. *Att.* 1.19.10, 2.3.4; *Fam.* 1.9.23. Moreover, both Cicero himself and his lifelong friend T. Pomponius Atticus wrote *memoranda* (*Denkschriften*) on Cicero's consulate, cf. Cic. *Att.* 2.1.1, 1.19.10. In accordance with

Within the context of his evaluation of Greek and Roman historians, Cicero extolled Herodotus and Thucydides highly with regard to the aforementioned criteria of literary performance as a blend of oratory and historiography. Herodotus is applauded as being the first writer to do so,¹⁴⁰ whereas Thucydides' style is described in far more detail.¹⁴¹ In reviewing Cicero's assessment one gets the impression that the Roman orator particularly valued Thucydides' speeches, since he compared Roman endeavours to the speeches Thucydides recorded for Pericles and Alcibiades.¹⁴²

Beside his prime interest in oratory, a biographical connection also attracted Cicero to Thucydides: both were banned from their city state at one time in their political career.¹⁴³ Cicero was exiled in 58 BCE; ten years later, at the height of the fashion for Atticism, Cicero, the anti-Atticist, on the one hand deepened his praise for Greek classical oratory, again using Thucydides as his example¹⁴⁴ and paraphrasing him.¹⁴⁵ On the other hand, in his criticism of the imitation of Attic orators and writers in the same book, he pointed to the variety of the Attic models, which made it impossible to imitate a specific Attic style¹⁴⁶ and referred to Thucydides as out of date and of no use for the standard situation of Roman oratory: the performance in court.¹⁴⁷ According to his judgement, it does not suffice to shine in historiographical writings or—as he describes it—‘in telling about wars’,¹⁴⁸ only his own space of experiences, the forum and the courts,

Cicero's wishes, this material would have been the basis of the larger historiographical work he unsuccessfully offered to the celebrated Greek historiographer and philosopher Posidonius of Apameia (Cic. *Att.* 2.1.2) and successfully offered to L. Lucceius, who to Cicero's dismay never completed his work (Cic. *Att.* 4.6.4, 4.11.2). In sum, Cicero wished for a celebration of his deeds in monographic form, rather than a critical evaluation, therefore he requested Lucceius not to be shy in bending the truth (Cic. *Fam.* 5.12). Cf. Gowing (2010), 387; Samotta (2009), 31–3, 395–400.

¹⁴⁰ Cic. *De Or.* 2.55.

¹⁴¹ Cic. *De Or.* 2.56 and 93.

¹⁴² Cic. *De Or.* 2.93. In this context Cicero seems to refer to the fictitious speeches as having been the actual spoken ones written down by Thucydides. Cf. Canfora (2006), 732.

¹⁴³ Cic. *De Or.* 2.56. It is a typical trait in Cicero's argumentation that he always reached out to paradigmatic ‘Great Men’ who shared a common fate with him. Cf. Bücher (2006), 174–95, 213–27.

¹⁴⁴ Cic. *Brut.* 27, 29, 66.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 43, 47.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 285; *Orat.* 234.

¹⁴⁷ Cic. *Brut.* 287–8; *Orat.* 30–2.

¹⁴⁸ Cic. *Orat.* 31: ... *in historiis bella narraret.*

matter. In the same sentence Cicero at least calls Thucydides an *explicator rerum* ('scientific author') who possessed the main ingredients of a 'good' Roman (*vir bonus*): *prudencia* ('wisdom'), *severitas* ('austerity'), and *gravitas* ('moral and intellectual integrity').¹⁴⁹

Due to his reaction to the literary fashion of Atticism, especially Thucydideism, Cicero commented more frequently on Thucydides, but in the end he used both authors as starting points within his critique of oratory on a formal plane,¹⁵⁰ calling them *veteres* ('old ones') without differentiating between the Herodotean and Thucydidean approach to historiography.¹⁵¹ Even Cicero's famous dictum that Herodotus was the 'father of history'¹⁵² fits into his rather simplified approach to Greek and Roman historiography: parallel to his egocentric view of the development of oratory, for Cicero, Greek historical writing was a teleological model of historiography that culminates in Cicero himself.¹⁵³

The last Roman author under discussion in this paper, C. Sallustius Crispus, was one of the *Thucydiddii* ('Thucydideans') as Cicero had scornfully called them.¹⁵⁴ Of course, Sallust did not use Thucydides as his only literary inspiration,¹⁵⁵ but it is generally acknowledged that Sallust relied heavily on Thucydides' concept of historiography, even to the point of trying to outdo him.¹⁵⁶ The main connections between Sallust and Thucydides were, first, their interest in the impact of human nature on the sociopolitical evolution of

¹⁴⁹ Cic. *Orat.* 31: ... *rerum explicator prudens severus gravis*, ...

¹⁵⁰ He compared Herodotus to a quiet stream and Thucydides to a war-trumpet (Cic. *Orat.* 39).

¹⁵¹ Ibid. 219.

¹⁵² Cic. *Leg.* 1.5: *pater historiae*.

¹⁵³ Cic. *Leg.* 1.5: ... *te illam tractante effici posse, ut in hoc etiam genere Graeciae nihil cedamus*. ('... if you set your mind [on writing history], we [the Romans] would not stay behind the Greeks in this matter'.)

¹⁵⁴ Cic. *Orat.* 30. Already in antiquity Sallust's love for Thucydides was recognized (Vell. Pat. 2.36.2; Quint. 10.1.101; Sen. *Contr.* 9.1.13–14). As was customary in ancient historiography Sallust did not mention Thucydides by name, but he surely thought of him when he wrote about the Athenian literary talents (Sall. *Cat.* 8.3).

¹⁵⁵ His main influences with regard to presentation and topics ranged from the works of Cato Censorius, L. Coelius Antipater, and L. Claudius Sisenna to the Greek historians Polybius, Posidonius of Apameia, and Ephorus of Cyme (for Ephorus as a Sallustian source cf. Canfora (2006), 736–8), cf. McGushin (1977), 6–21; Nicols (1999); Albrecht (1994), 349–53; Levene (2007), 280–3.

¹⁵⁶ Canfora (2006), 738: 'Rather than extracting information from Thucydides' work, Sallust wishes to "rework" Thucydides ...'.

a city-state society in times of war and/or internal discord; second, their interest in the tension between ethical/moral values and political necessities as a result of the exercise of power, and finally, in the decline of such a 'face-to-face society' because of the unavoidable vices of its members. Both authors lived during periods of crisis and had their share of practical political and military experience,¹⁵⁷ which led to a certain disillusionment concerning the behaviour of man.

Thucydides' influence is visible not only in the structure and style of Sallust's works.¹⁵⁸ As Thomas Scanlon has thoroughly proven, Sallust's intellectual development, starting from his earlier monographs and through to the largely lost *historiae*, which recorded contemporary history from 78 BCE onwards, and were written beginning in 39 BCE and probably unfinished at the time of his death in 34 BCE, showed a 'decreasing dependence on Thucydides as a stylistic model' but a constant preoccupation with Thucydides' main theme, the fate of a great city state at the height of its power.¹⁵⁹

But what about Herodotus? Sallust certainly knew and exploited the Hellenistic writers, whose dramatic approach to historiography was a Herodotean heritage, but can we detect more visible traces? One of the most remarkable ethnographical digressions in the *Bellum Jugurthinum*, the tale of the Carthaginian brothers Philaeni who sacrificed themselves in order to settle a boundary-dispute,¹⁶⁰ is a typical aetiological myth of Greek origin. It is not featured in Herodotus' description of Libya and Cyrene,¹⁶¹ but the un-Sallustian plain narration¹⁶² and the narrative alternation between the folk tale and the author's own geographical and meteorological objections demonstrate the Sallustian aspiration to show his literary mastery of a Herodotean style, and possibly his attempt to outdo the Greek

¹⁵⁷ For Sallust, cf. Samotta (2009), 177–202.

¹⁵⁸ e.g. the monographic treatments of the Catilinarian Conspiracy (written c.42/41 BCE) and the Jugurthine War (written c.40 BCE), which display stylistic reduction and omissions within the narrative in order to emphasize the underlying message, analytical distance via generalization, characterization by way of ethnographical or historiographical digressions and the insertion of fictitious letters and speeches, as well as overall antithetical style and brevity, and a deep interest in the usage of terminology.

¹⁵⁹ Scanlon (1980), 216.

¹⁶⁰ Sall. *Iug.* 79–80.

¹⁶¹ Hdt. 4.145–205.

¹⁶² Koestermann (1971), 278 *ad loc.* 79.4.

model.¹⁶³ Even more striking due to its consistency throughout his work is Sallust's utilization of the first-person narrator, who sometimes expresses doubt, clarifies and verifies the story on the narrator's level, or simply guides the reader through the text.¹⁶⁴ This literary technique is far more reminiscent of Herodotus than of any other Sallustian predecessor.¹⁶⁵

V. CONCLUSION

This chapter has aimed to show that Thucydides' and Herodotus' influence can be not only detected, but also distinguished, in Roman literary production both before and after Pydna. As the examples provided above hope to illustrate, the 'dark matter' is perhaps not so entirely dark after all. The intention of this chapter has not been to present the historians as a literary quarry for their Roman successors, but to draw a plausible picture of the influence of classical Greek historiography on the beginnings and substance of Roman historical writing. Starting with the pre-Polybian age and ending with historians of Sallustian calibre,¹⁶⁶ we can reconstruct elements of the direct or indirect influence of the two historians, and also of the Roman conception of their relationship to one another as it developed throughout the republican period.

From the times of Fabius Pictor onwards, Roman historiography was capable of digesting the fifth-century authors in order to embed itself into Hellenistic historiography. Roman appreciation of the Western Greek historians from the beginning of the second century

¹⁶³ *pace* Scanlon, who opts for Thucydides (1980: 132–6) and Paul, who prefers Theopompus, Timaeus, or Posidonius (1984: 199 *ad loc.* 79.1).

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Grethlein (2006).

¹⁶⁵ On the diversities of the Herodotean and Thucydidean narrator, cf. de Jong (2004); Rood (2004), 115–28.

¹⁶⁶ One should not forget Cornelius Nepos, a lifelong friend of Cicero and Atticus, who wrote primarily biographies explicitly using Thucydides as a source for the lives of Themistocles (*Them.* 1.4, 9.1, 10.4), Alcibiades (*Alc.* 11.1), and Pausanias (*Paus.* 2.2), cf. Albrecht (1994), 382–4; Geiger (1985), 66–115. Another contemporary, the Roman Epicurean poet Lucretius, wrote the didactic poem *De Rerum Natura* ('On the nature of things') using Thucydides' plague narrative (Thuc. 2.49–55), cf. Edith Foster, *The Political Aims of Lucretius' Translation of Thucydides* (2011).

onwards paralleled Roman political aims in the Punic War period. During the next phase of Roman historiography Roman writers were emancipated from their Western Greek contemporaries, not least due to the arrival of literary war-booty after the fall of Perseus. But, more importantly, on a political level Rome was at that time the force to be reckoned with and therefore no longer valued the views of her defeated Greek contemporaries. Historians like Cato Censorius looked to Athens' great era of power for literary inspiration, and figured the authors of the fifth century BCE as their 'true' cultural heritage, even trying to surpass them, as they had surpassed the Greeks politically and militarily.

Cato and his contemporaries and successors were surely not aware that their Roman predecessors, for instance Fabius Pictor, had already adapted fourth- and third-century Greek historiography to the extent described above. It is therefore almost impossible to extract an indigenous Roman historiography: Roman writers had developed the genre within the literary, but also geographical, boundaries of the Greek sphere of influence. With the rise of Atticism in the last century BCE Rome saw a literary struggle between the generations, as many young writers turned away from the stylistic abundance and sumptuousness of their fathers' generation. This literary trend supported a preference for Thucydides, but Thucydides' popularity was also rooted in the similar political situation: the rivalry between Athens and Sparta had instigated an internecine conflict in Greece that spanned nearly seven decades. In the first century BCE the Romans could identify themselves deeply with the Thucydidean issues of exercising power while trying to uphold civic morality.

In sum, Rome benefited continuously from the stimulation of Greek classical historiography, be it as a direct influx via war-booty, or an indirect influence through Western Greek channels. The Roman historians used Thucydides and Herodotus to set themselves apart from their Greek contemporaries, but also strove to outdo their classical paradigms. It is no wonder that the most zealous to outshine the *veteres* were Cato Censorius, Cicero, and Sallust: all three were *homines novi* ('new men') who were accustomed to fight their way to the top of Rome's highly competitive society. As for the issue of the relationship of Herodotus and Thucydides in the eyes of the Roman recipients, one can deduce that they were not seen as rivals, but as associates in the same tradition and epoch. Although Cicero

differentiated between the rhetorical techniques and manners of Herodotus and Thucydides in his detailed investigation of oratorical style, he finally integrated them into a chronological time frame without a deeper look into their reciprocal connection.¹⁶⁷ As we saw above¹⁶⁸ Cicero could not free himself from his own *spatium historicum*, and measured the impact of Greek historiography only in terms of its practical value for what a Roman citizen could do for the *res publica Romana*.

Evaluating from the modern point of view the different ‘gravitational effects’ on the mostly fragmented Roman historiography one can conclude that Herodotus never went out of fashion, since his rhetorical style was adopted by his Hellenistic successors, and republican Romans came to see him as the ‘father’ of historiography. Thucydides, on the other hand, was a special case with regard to presentation, structure, and style and therefore not widely established as a model in Hellenistic times. Regarding his style and his sometimes harshly honest autopsy of human nature, he was no charming paradigm, but a dry and decisive moral authority who went so far as to criticize the consequences of Athenian thalassocracy for other Greeks. Not until the Romans felt the side-effects of their ‘Imperial Republic’ did they turn their full attention to Thucydides. The late republican internal disorder extended into the Romans’ own homes, provoking a struggle between the generations that was marked on the literary plane by the quarrel about Thucydideism, and viewed on the political plane as the ‘uprising’ of the young(ish), sometimes extravagant, and mostly rebellious politicians of the 50s BCE.¹⁶⁹ But as the survey has shown, narrative excerpts and structural elements of Thucydides and Herodotus alike were used in this, and in all ages of Roman republican historiography.

¹⁶⁷ Cic. *De Or.* 2.51–72.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Cic. *Orat.* 31.

¹⁶⁹ Cicero (*Att.* 7.7.6) famously coined the phrase *perdita iuventus* (‘lost youth’), not to be mistaken for the connotation in Ernest Hemingway’s *Lost Generation*, but to be understood literally as ‘foul; corrupt; depraved’, cf. Samotta (2009), 179–83.

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